

TO WHOM DO SCHOOLS BELONG?

*An introduction to the study of
School Government*

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BASIL BLACKWELL · OXFORD

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PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

THIS book is not a history of education nor a survey of our educational system; such ground has already been well covered. My particular aim has been to stimulate more interest in the underlying principles of school government, and I have tried therefore to give an account of some of the ideas affecting the control of education, and also to explain how our own historic *via media* came to be accepted. I have sought to be impartial, and if I have shown any conscious favouritism it has been in revealing my regard for W. E. Forster, to whose rugged common sense the social historian seldom seems to do justice.

In these challenging days the conventional approaches to the study of school government need to be supplemented, if not preceded, by some consideration as to where the seat of authority in education should be. Awareness of this fundamental issue on the part of the citizen is the best protection in a democracy against undesirable legislation or misguided administration. Reading Erika Mann's *School for Barbarians*, or Peter Wiener's *German with Tears*, it is natural to console ourselves with the wishful belief that it can't happen here. It is true that our national character seems proof against violent extremes, but in the half-way houses, which we delight to build, there is room for much uncomfortable furniture.

The ill-starred Physical Training and Recreation Act of 1937 is an illustration of legislation which, if the electorate had realised its implications, would probably never have reached the statute book unless and until it had been transmuted into a workable and desirable measure. At the time, however, no one, in spite of an informative White Paper, seemed to appreciate the undemocratic character of its administrative clauses which, because they were so contrary to our tradition of representative government, eventually brought what might have been a useful statute into general disfavour. It is worth remembering as a warning that this Act, warmly welcomed by all parties and by the Press, concentrated wide powers over an important sphere of education in the hands of non-elective Central and Regional councils; and that under its auspices one aspect of education, the physical, was singled out for special emphasis and separate administration. If

there is an absence of discrimination on the part of the public, it is always possible for harmful legislation or undesirable statutory orders to be formulated with the best of intentions and subsequently to receive a thoroughly undeserved welcome.

There is thus a strong case, especially as a new and comprehensive Education Bill is said by some to be in the air, for making the control of education a subject of much wider discussion than has hitherto been customary. Our citizenship would gain if in Adult Education, B.B.C. and University circles this problem came fairly frequently under review. I cannot pretend that this inadequate volume provides a satisfactory introduction to a discussion of such a large issue, but I hope that it may incite some readers to probe more deeply and thoroughly than I have been able to do.

I should like to explain that although I had long felt that there was an urgent need for speculative approach to the study of school government, I had never dreamt of writing a book on this or any other aspect of the problem. It so happened, however, that during one of the war-time winters I experienced a good many unoccupied wakeful nights, and I spent some of these extra hours in looking through a file of notes which I had used in the past for talks about educational administration. I derived a certain amount of pleasure or, at any rate, a sense of escape from the task of piecing them together into some sort of unity, and I decided somewhat rashly to publish the result in the hope that it might partially fill a gap until the right book comes along. It may perhaps stimulate someone goaded by its limitations to approach a Graham Wallas of this generation, and beg of him (or her) to convert his learning and experience of public affairs into a book that will rouse in a wide circle a genuine interest in the government of education. I ought to add that I have not thought it fair to ask anyone to check my manuscript, and I must take full responsibility for its shortcomings. If, however, it should by chance find its way into scholarly hands, I shall be most grateful to be told of mistakes and errors of interpretation.

It may well be asked how it comes about that a volume of such unscholarly origin issues from a House in which, as the Poet Laureate has recently sung,

'Half England's scholars nibble books or browse.'

The explanation is to be found in a friendship forged when the

Head of the House and I spent or misspent our youth 'secundum regulam scholarium Oxonie qui de Merton cognominantur.' For the care and thought bestowed on the production of this book, at a time when publishing is beset with so many difficulties, I am most grateful to him and his colleagues.

W. O. LESTER SMITH.

April 30th, 1942.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

In the two and a half years which have elapsed since this book was written a new and momentous Education Act has been framed, fought for and brought safely on to the Statute Book; in the words of its author, Mr. R. A. Butler, it 'completely recasts the whole of the law as it affects education.' Advantage has therefore been taken of a demand for a second edition to rewrite the last chapter of the book, and it now concludes with a brief impression of contemporary educational opinion and a short digest of the new Act and the findings of the various departmental committees set up to advise on problems connected with it. Some necessary corrections and revision of interpretation have also been made in the other chapters; I am much indebted to many readers who have kindly sent me suggestions, and especially to Professor F. A. Cavenagh and Mr. Felix Crowder for giving me the benefit of their special knowledge on a number of points.

W. O. L. S.

January, 1945.

FRONTISPIECE

‘The central point of the dispute is: To whom does the school belong? To the family, to the community, to the Church, or to the State? All these are interested in the school. The problem is: Can their various interests be united by a just consideration of their various rights and duties?’

(PROFESSOR W. REIN, of Jena, at Cambridge in 1900.)

‘Authority, if it is to govern education, must rest upon one or several of the powers we have considered: the State, the Church, the schoolmaster, and the parent. We have seen that no one of them can be trusted to care adequately for the child’s welfare, since each wishes the child to minister to some end which has nothing to do with its own well-being.’

(BERTRAND RUSSELL: *Sceptical Essays*, 1928.)

‘Education is essentially a social and not a mere individual activity. Now there are three necessary societies, distinct from one another and yet harmoniously combined by God, into which man is born: two, namely the family and civil society, belong to the natural order; the third, the Church, to the supernatural order. . . . Consequently, education which is concerned with man as a whole, individually and socially, in the order of nature and in the order of grace, necessarily belongs to all these three societies, in due proportion, corresponding according to the disposition of divine Providence to the co-ordination of their respective ends.’

(Encyclical, *Divini illius magistri*, 1929.)

‘We will take away their children. These we will train and educate to become new Germans. We will not permit them to lapse into the old way of thinking, but will give them thorough training. We will take them when they are ten years old and bring them up in the spirit of the community until they are eighteen. They shall not escape us. They will join the Party, the S.A., the S.S., or other formations, or go into factories and offices. Later on they will do two years of Military Service. Who shall dare say that such training will not produce a nation?’

(ADOLF HITLER, 1937.)

‘The doctrine that the provision of education is a national concern has long been accepted among us, as well as the correlative doctrine that agents of public authority may usefully help the schools to express in their teaching and general life the best traditions of national life and character. No one proposes to return to the position of Herbert Spencer, who would exclude the State wholly from the field of education. But observing, as one cannot now fail to do, how completely and exclusively the State may occupy that field—turning the schools and the teachers into mere instruments of its policies, vehicles for the dissemination of the ideas it approves, and means for excluding from the minds of the young all ideas of which it disapproves—then we feel bound to assert our faith in the English compromise between State regulation and freedom of teaching, and to express the hope that circumstances will never arise to endanger its continuance. For where the schools lose their freedom, the freedom of the individual citizen is in peril.’

*(Consultative Committee Report on Secondary Education
(the Spens Report), 1938.)*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

'Old things need not be therefore true,
Oh, brother men! nor yet the new.'

(A. H. Clough)

WAR BRINGS CHANGE

War brings social change, and not least in the planning of education. It was in 1815 after Waterloo that Brougham's Committee met to consider 'the Education of the Lower Orders,' and it was in 1918 after four years of war that the Fisher Act was adopted. In the early stages of this present struggle Mr. Eden said in the House of Commons: 'The war would do more than shake many strongly held views. It would bring about fundamental revolutionary changes in the economic and social life of this country, but no Government could attempt to say what those changes would be. The truth was that war presented an audit of a nation. It exposed weaknesses ruthlessly and brutally which called for a change.' On the same day *The Schoolmaster* had a leading article on the subject of 'Youth,' in which it observed: 'Next to winning the war, wise provision for youth is a question of major concern to the nation.' And proceeding, it observed: 'From time to time comparisons are drawn between the British and the German, Italian or Russian ways of dealing with youth, and we are exhorted to adopt this or that feature of a foreign method.' The orderly and progressive development about which reformers spoke at the beginning of the century has ceased to be a practicable ideal; for since then two major wars have disturbed the peace of the world and played havoc with our civilisation. Ideas stimulated by the ferment in many lands challenge each other as tortured humanity everywhere clamours for a more decent way of living. And often it is to education, a new and better kind of education, that men look in their despair as they strive to find for their children a method of escape from the afflictions which have ruined their lives.

WHO DECIDES WHAT THE CHANGES SHALL BE?

'Mankind,' says Professor Whitehead, 'is now in one of its rare

moods of shifting its outlook. 'The mere compulsion of tradition has lost its force.' At whose behest are changes made, and who decides the new forms of thought and practice? Who, for example, will decide what is to happen about education in Britain during the next twenty years? We are all fairly familiar with what the text-books tell us about our Constitution, its checks and balances, and its elaborate Parliamentary system. But will Parliament decide what our education is to be? In a noble prayer, said to have been composed by Laud, the Church of England prays that all things may be so ordered and settled by the endeavours of the High Court of Parliament that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be established among us for all generations. But members of this High Court are but ordinary mortals, and even more subject to the ebb and flow of ideas than are dictators. Nor often enough are they better able to discriminate. 'A hotch-potch,' says Mr. Ensor of *Mein Kampf*, 'of varied ingredients, containing much autobiography, much doctrine, a good deal of history (often bad), and much polemic (often very abusive), it is the work of a powerful mind which never underwent in youth any higher education. . . . He jumps from one topic to another like the open-air speaker that he used to be.' Yet it was an epoch-making book which diverted the stream of history.

Men of powerful mind, undisciplined and lacking in logical sequence, are to be found, especially if eloquence is included in their armoury, in governing positions all the world over. They flourish as well in democracies as in authoritarian environments. 'The formidable fact is,' said Lord Quickwood of the Parliament which he adorned, 'that the highest authority of our immense and unequalled Empire lies alternately in the hands of one of two knots of vehement, uncompromising, and unbalanced men.'¹ As a rule such men are responsive to suggestion and have the force and persistence to translate what they approve into concrete shape. So complex has our civilisation become and so intense is the pressure of affairs on our public men that too often the ideas which they hastily accept find their place in ill-digested legislation before their significance and implications are appreciated. It is only too easy for them with the best possible intentions to saddle their fellow-citizens with decisions which have reactions never contemplated when they were first eloquently proposed. It is

¹ *Conservatism* (H.U.L.), p. 238.

probable therefore that the ideas adventuring about in our disordered world will more than anything else determine the shape of things to come in education in the next twenty years. What matters is that our rulers should somehow be guided to select wisely from the ample choice of alternatives at their disposal.

DISCUSSION A BRAKE ON RASH DECISION

'Change,' says Bagehot, 'from the age of status to the age of choice was first made in states where the government was to a great and a growing extent a government by discussion, and where the subjects of that discussion were in some degree abstract or, as we should say, matters of principle.' Discussion is important as a background to government because if combined with study and reflection it is perhaps the only effective way of creating a public mind sufficiently intelligent to act as a brake upon rash leadership. All of us are under a moral obligation to have as intelligent an outlook on affairs as possible, for unless a nation acquires a collective critical faculty, governments can and do make laws which are not in the least understood until they come into operation. 'Some years ago,' says Lord Riddell, referring presumably to the part which Asquith had played in framing the second Municipal Corporations Act, 'I briefed Asquith to apply for a licence for the Stratford Empire Music Hall. The Stratford Town Council treated him with slight respect. Several Councillors called out, "What's the gentleman's name?" Asquith was much surprised. When we got outside he remarked, "Well, it is interesting to see what we have created. I never thought it was like this".'¹ It is quite as true of democratic as it is of authoritarian rule that the absence of popular discrimination encourages misrule; even if the assent of the electorate is sought, there is no guarantee that the subsequent legislation will be well considered. 'It is an astonishing fallacy,' says Sir Norman Angell, 'this notion that one who believes in democracy must believe in the innate, "natural," political capacity of the ordinary man.'

All this is so generally recognised as to be almost a truism, but we make no real effort to 'educate our masters.' We provide good full-time education up to the day when boys and girls leave school, but in spite of or perhaps because of various well-meaning attempts there has never been a hearty drive to secure a continuance of part-time education for young people between the ages of

¹ Lord Riddell, 'More Pages from my Diary' (*Country Life*, 1934), p. 11.

fourteen and eighteen. The nation saw the light in 1918 and made in the Fisher Act provision for a chain of Day Continuation Schools, but the ideal perished in the gloom of post-war depression. 'When we achieved,' said Lawrence of Arabia of those years of disillusionment, 'and the new world desired, the old men came out again and took from us our victory, and remade it in the likeness of the former world we knew.' Still more important, however, in the creation of an intelligent public opinion is a well-distributed service of adult education. Mr. Ernest Green has assessed the inadequacy of our attainment in this direction in the following terms. 'The 1921 British Census showed,' he says, '18,419,000 occupied persons excluding employers and those earning over £250 per annum. If we take that as the prospective audience for Adult Education it is a modest estimate of our task. What have we done? According to the Board of Education Report, 1936, in the whole of the Evening Institutes, Day Continuation Schools, Evening Technical Schools, Adult Education Classes and every form of what we would claim to be "further education," there were less than 2½ million students. . . . Of the 2½ million who were interested, 77·3 per cent. were following technical subjects, including physical training, so that the proportion interested in cultural subjects, and particularly the social sciences, was infinitesimal.'¹

Adult education, wherever it has been well provided, has been so much appreciated that it is strange that so little has been done publicly to encourage it. The extra-mural departments of the Universities, the W.E.A., the B.B.C. discussion groups and some measure of provision by Local Authorities together with a few residential colleges for Adult Education constitute almost the whole of our national effort. 'The ideal of democracy,' said Lord Baldwin when opening the Bonar Law College at Ashridge, 'is a very fine one, but no ideals can run themselves, and if democracy is to be preserved and yield the fruits that those who believe in it would fain see, the only way it can be done is by all the individuals, according to their power, equipping themselves sufficiently to keep the whole mass sweet and true.' Colleges and courses are by no means the only media of adult education; home reading, for example, can be a most formative influence and so can the theatre. The value of Public Libraries and of a supply of vital books at reasonable cost must not be overlooked. For disciplined

¹ In *Educating for Democracy* (Macmillan), p. 106.

study one book on the home shelf is probably worth two from the library, and a supply of the best current literature at a Woolworth figure is as important as any other factor in the task of educating men and women as to the significance of the problems of the day. Only too often we are deprived of the companionship of books that really matter, because their price is frequently more than enough to make a modest Penguin blush. Another element in adult education is the standard of the Press; when a great provincial daily loses its identity, a vital force in regional culture disappears and journalism and adult education are alike bereaved. The demise of the *Manchester Guardian*, for example, would not only have world reactions, but it would be a shattering blow to the quality of public discussion in the north-west of England.

THE PARAMOUNT QUESTION AFFECTING EDUCATION

Since 1870 we in this country have not had to give much consideration to the fundamentals of school government. But events abroad have from time to time during the last twenty years reminded us that the problem of sovereignty is as important to a school as it is to the wider society of the nation; and it becomes increasingly clear that we are living in a period of challenge and at times seem to be

‘Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born.’

It is well therefore to clear our minds about the main issues of school government and prepare ourselves for any of the strange blasts of doctrine which may blow along. For whoever exercises the supreme power in school affairs can determine educational thought and practice; and although this power may be shared or it may be united, it is as true of a school as it is of any other community that somewhere this governing authority must exist—*qui habet socium, habet magistrum*—and that upon its nature much depends. It is often difficult to assert where this power actually rests or, as constitutional lawyers say, where sovereignty is; and it can be exercised, not only in different ways but also to varying degrees, just as you can drive a horse on the curb or use a light rein. Some say that in Britain public opinion constitutes the actual sovereignty; and without entering into this argument we can admit that public opinion does greatly influence the way in which we are governed and that is one reason why it is desir-

able that we should through discussion try to ensure that the public mind appreciates the issues involved in the problem of school government. But public opinion even in a democracy does not entirely settle how schools are governed, for there are both legal and traditional imperatives which are sometimes more forceful than opinion and operate in spite of it.

WHY THE QUESTION OF SCHOOL GOVERNMENT IS IMPORTANT

You may on first consideration feel that it does not matter much where the power of determination in school government rests, and even think that those who discuss the question are indulging in a species of idle curiosity. Schools will be schools, it may be argued, whoever wields a distant authority over them; or you can contemptuously dismiss the problem with a favourite quotation, saying:

‘For forms of government let fools contest,
Whate’er is best administered is best.’

But this flatters the head master or administrator unduly: he has to be obedient to statute and to many other factors outside his control which govern his actions and, more important, his attitude. Most of the wars of religion have been fought to decide the relative powers of Church and State, and the shelves of all the libraries of the world are crowded with books of all periods in which this issue is learnedly debated. It is a vital problem, because it concerns spiritual freedom. Scarcely less important, however, is the question of authority in the sphere of education; for that too involves spiritual values and the right to determine them. By some it will be held to be part of the historic struggle between the religious and the secular power; and by others it will be regarded as a similar but separate battleground. It certainly differs from the Church and State controversy in two major respects. In the first place, control of education has never before occupied the centre of the stage in the drama of authority *v.* freedom. It has now, however, become a paramount question, because it has been raised so acutely in totalitarian countries and because owing to the wide development of education in the last hundred years the government of education has grown into a comprehensive problem. The second differentiating point is that there is as yet but a comparatively small literature dealing specifically with the question of the seat of authority in education. As

a vital issue of the day, however, it calls for thought and study, and as a consequence of the spread of education and the fact that some contemporary rulers have exploited education so ruthlessly there can be little doubt that in the libraries of the future the literature of this problem will occupy scarcely less space than do the books which men throughout the ages have written about the government of religion. There is perhaps a third point of difference, namely, that while the copious literature about Church and State includes many representatives both of the spiritual and secular standpoint, the books which deal with the relationship between State and Education have approached the subject almost invariably from a political or an administrative angle. As the literature of the subject grows, it will no doubt inspire in the school-world defenders of the educational faith as forceful as any who in times past engaged in verbal battle against the encroachments of Kings and Emperors upon the realm of the spirit.

SOME OF THE CLAIMANTS TO A CONTROLLING VOICE IN SCHOOL GOVERNMENT

In these pages it is proposed merely to indicate in outline and chiefly by reference to history some of the principal considerations involved in the relationship between schools and the various powers which from time to time claim dominion over them. At the beginning of this century, just before the passing of the Balfour Education Act, an important course of lectures was given under the auspices of the University of Cambridge: they were subsequently published by the Cambridge Press under the general title of *Education in the Nineteenth Century*. The concluding lecture was given by a Professor of the University of Jena, whose subject was 'The Development of Educational Ideas.' He told his audience how successfully Germany had overcome what in England from 1870 had been popularly known as 'the religious question.' 'In Germany,' he said optimistically, 'the problem was solved by adjudging the schools to the State. The school is a "politicum"; it must educate citizens of the State.' Then he explained the nature of the controversy which his fellow-countrymen had so efficiently resolved. 'The central point of the dispute is,' he said, 'to whom does the school belong? To the family, to the community, to the Church, or to the State?' Proving how right Germany was in choosing the State as the custodian of education, he proceeded: 'Compulsory

education is closely connected with military service and manhood suffrage. Though educational matters have an individual foundation, they are a part of the social whole; and this becomes better, the further and deeper education extends. It is for this reason that, according to German views, the State which embraces politically the social whole, is and must be the master of the schools. Educational matters, just like all other public affairs, must have a central head, if they are to be carried on systematically and if they are to flourish.¹ There was not therefore a great difference of view between the Germany of the Hohenzollerns and that of Hitler as to the seat of educational authority, and there was much the same assuredness about being unquestionably right.

The British attitude has always been much more hesitant, and is probably even less dogmatic to-day than it has been at any time in the last seventy years. 'Authority,' says Mr. Bertrand Russell, in one of his *Sceptical Essays*, 'if it is to govern education, must rest upon one or several of the powers we have considered, the State, the Church, the schoolmaster and the parent. We have seen that no one of them can be trusted to care adequately for the child's welfare, since each wishes the child to minister to some end which has nothing to do with its own well-being. . . . Unfortunately, the child lacks the experience required for the guidance of its own life, and is therefore a prey to the sinister interests that batten on its innocence. That is what makes the difficulty of education as a political problem.'

CAN EDUCATION BE DETACHED FROM POLITICS?

Although we have had in effect a national system of education for seventy years, it is interesting to note how many English people regard education as detached from the political sphere. At educational conferences speakers often deplore the tendency of politicians to meddle with education, and sometimes they urge the selection of a Minister of Education from outside the political circle, one whose sole interest is in schools and the welfare of children. For such reasons the selection by Mr. Lloyd George of Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, which led to the passing of the Education Act, 1918, and the introduction of the Burnham Scale, was applauded. Those who hold such views deplore the discontinuity in educational planning which ensues from the swing of the

¹ *Education in the Nineteenth Century* (C.U.P., 1901), p. 257.

political pendulum. They describe education as a service sacred and apart, much as theologians of certain schools of thought speak of the Church. To borrow an ecclesiastical phrase, they criticise any Erastian tendency and regard contact with the political world almost as though it were a source of contamination. There are others who are led by somewhat similar considerations to the opinion that teachers should have nothing to do with politics. Thus for one reason or another there are a good many people who draw a sharp distinction between politics and education; they separate one from the other much as mediæval people distinguished between the secular and the religious. Some who profess such views are actuated by the highest motives, and among them are those who believe that truth is a primary objective in all education, although of course such an attitude rather begs Pilate's famous question. The strongest motive, however, for this detached view of education is a belief that all that really matters is the individuality of each child and that the teacher's essential function is the development of personality. 'The primary concern of those who have such a sacred trust as you have,' Lord Baldwin once said when addressing an audience of teachers on the subject of education and politics, 'is the unfolding of the child's personality, and not the victory of party.'¹

ARE SCHOOLS TO BE USED FOR PROPAGANDA?

At the other end of the scale are those who believe that the Government should deliberately use schools to foster certain opinions. They argue that if you want a strong and united nation you must have a definite national type, and that to accomplish this you should take full advantage of the plastic years of childhood. It is of course not a new idea, but there has been a resurgence of it in recent years. It is a central feature of totalitarian and communist thought, but its adherents in this country are almost confined to those who sympathise with one or other of those political theories. There are, however, a few people who, as a counterblast to authoritarian practice, advocate a more direct indoctrination of democratic citizenship in our schools. Even the most zealous of them, however, hesitate to travel the whole way along this road. 'We are not proposing,' the advocates of direct citizenship teaching say, 'that teachers should be exposed to any kind of test as to their political views, nor that they should necessarily

¹ *On England* (Philip Allan, 1927), p. 165.

ever employ dogmatic method in their teaching; but we are confident that 99 per cent. of the teachers, as of any other section of the population, would in fact accept, consciously or unconsciously, a belief in the main principles underlying the democratic faith, and would be prepared to hand on that faith to their pupils.'

A noteworthy feature of English life to-day is the large number of associations formed to propagate or combat particular causes. Many of them attach great importance to influencing the young, some even have junior sections of their organisation. They are constantly—one or other of them—asking Education Authorities to countenance their lecturers or circularise their literature. In this respect their view of school is similar to that of authoritarians: they regard it as a means to particular ends. The normal practice of Local Authorities is to turn a deaf ear to such requests, but they do from time to time make exceptions to their rule. The Board of Education experiences a similar pressure which it also resists, although there have in the present century been at least three important departures from normal policy, namely, support of Temperance as part of the teaching of Hygiene, advocacy of the League of Nations, which occupies twenty-eight pages of the official *Suggestions for Teachers*, and the short-lived National Fitness Campaign, in which authoritarian influence was faintly discernible. Such exceptions are so few and so moderate that they help to illustrate the impartial attitude of the State in this country in its conduct of education. The British aim is to turn out sensible individuals appreciative of their civic responsibilities. 'A well-balanced educational system,' says the Hadow Report, 'must combine these two ideals in the single conception of social individuality. The general aim should therefore be to offer the fullest scope to individuality while keeping steadily in view the claims of society.' The accomplishment of this aim is left almost entirely to the teacher, and his only official guidance, except that given by visiting Inspectors, is conveyed in the *Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers* referred to above, in which the purpose of education is defined as 'the development of the full potentialities of the child in accord with the good of the community.'

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INFLUENCES

It should be noted, however, that education in this country, although comparatively free from State dictation, is responsive to

other external influences. Its soul is dyed the colour of the political and social philosophy of its age and environment. The English Public School, for example, while completely outside the reach of State control is definitely susceptible to the economic and caste outlook of its clientèle. Because of its high social prestige, its traditions are copied by other schools, and many parents—not excluding some with strong equalitarian views—prefer their children to attend schools which reproduce the conventions of the Public School. For this reason those who strive for equality in school organisation are always fighting an uphill battle. Many thought that the provision of higher education for women would produce a new type of secondary school, but it is remarkable how closely the Girls' High Schools have followed the Public School tradition. It might fairly be said that the more they differ, the more are they the same thing. Attempts have been made in this country to provide various alternative types of post-primary schools adjusted to the different aptitude or vocational needs of pupils: such a plan is advocated in both the Hadow and the Spens Reports. But the British parent is slow to adjust his outlook to such administrative logic; he persists in preferring the Secondary School because it more nearly reflects the Public School and is therefore deemed to possess a status value. 'In England,' says Max Beerbohm, in an essay on *Pretending*, 'the poor want to live like the rich. . . . If he would have his ideas realised, the Socialist must first kill the snob.' 'The difficulty,' says Professor Godfrey Thomson, 'is to create the different types of school side by side on a social equality, without permitting one to appear higher or lower in the scale of snobbishness.'¹

Thus without any pressure from the State or in spite of it, the aims of education can be governed and often are by the weight of public opinion. The educational ethic, as it were, becomes the mirror of the aspirations and prejudices of its age and environment. 'Different kinds of morality,' says Dr. Olaf Stapledon in his *Philosophy and Living*, 'will develop in different economic environments. A hunting community will perhaps stress hardihood, an agricultural community industriousness. A feudal aristocracy will glorify the martial powers by which it maintains its position. The virtues prized in a commercial class are likely to be those which helped it to gain and retain power—in fact, the

¹ Godfrey H. Thomson: *A Modern Philosophy of Education* (Allen & Unwin, 1928), p. 271.

business virtues of prudence, reliability, and individual initiative.¹ Such considerations play a large part in the management of education in this country, as anyone who has helped to administer it in different parts of Britain knows.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY

'The devil was sick, the devil a monk would be.' The outbreak of another war has not unnaturally led to a revived interest in religion; and soon after hostilities began, a drive was initiated in influential quarters for better religious teaching in schools. The movement finds it difficult to make headway because its advocates are sometimes not too well informed as to the nature and scope of religious study and observance in schools to-day. Some of them too hastily assume that religion is neglected in a great many schools, and there is a tendency to suggest deterioration as if there had been a golden religious age in some Victorian twilight. The injustice of the criticism alienates many who might be friendly to the movement; it reveals only too clearly that some of the new evangelists are unaware of the work done in recent years by teachers, Local Authorities and Training Colleges, voluntary and maintained. A few, however, of those who seek to achieve a more Christian Britain by a process of education realise that this criticism of the schools is beside the mark, and there have been authoritative pronouncements dissociating the drive for better religious teaching from the campaign of ill-informed criticism. Many believe that for the realisation of their dream the major issue is not one of teaching or syllabus, but of law and school polity. For our arrangements for religious teaching prior to the Education Act, 1944, have, of course, been determined by that mid-Victorian compromise which, in order to avoid controversy, confined religious observance and teaching to certain defined periods of each day. This limitation, combined with the operation of the conscience clause, has been the means of rescuing education from bitter sectarian strife, but it has of course been in some measure an impediment to the spiritual life of our schools and has done harm by drawing such an artificial distinction between the religious and the secular in the curriculum. It has, however, not prevented a great many schools from becoming true Christian communities, but this must be attributed, like so many other miracles in education, to the fact that the personality of the

¹ Stapledon: *Philosophy and Living* (Penguin), vol. 1, p. 190.

teacher can, when sufficiently vital, triumph over legal and all other hindrances that the wit of man may impose.

But there can be little doubt that the place of religion in education will be challenged in the future as violently as it has been in the past. We shall hear again the protests of the secularist, and we shall also hear the voices of those who desire a strengthening of the bonds between the school and the Christian faith. Such points of view are often closely associated with political attitudes, and provide another example of the intimate interaction of education and politics. 'It is not impertinent,' says Mr. T. S. Eliot, 'to remark upon the close relationship of educational theory and political theory. One would indeed be surprised to find the educational system and the political system of any country in complete disaccord; and what I have said about the negative character of our political philosophy should suggest a parallel criticism of our education, not as it is found in practice here or there, but in the assumptions about the nature and purpose of education which tend to affect practice throughout the country. And I do not need to remind you that a pagan totalitarian Government is hardly likely to leave education to look after itself, or to refrain from interfering with the traditional methods of the oldest institutions; of some of the results abroad of such interference on the most irrelevant grounds we are quite well aware. There is likely to be, everywhere, more and more pressure of circumstance towards adapting educational ideals to political ideals, and in the one as in the other sphere, we have only to choose between a higher and a lower rationalisation. In a Christian Society education must be religious, not in the sense that it will be administered by ecclesiastics, still less in the sense that it will exercise pressure, or attempt to instruct everyone in theology, but in the sense that its aims will be directed by a Christian philosophy of life. It will no longer be a term comprehending a variety of unrelated subjects undertaken for special purposes or for none at all.'¹

Here, then, in Christianity is yet another claimant to a controlling voice in education, and there are several others. Some of us would prefer not to worry overmuch about these challenging philosophies; it is so much pleasanter to go on digging our gardens in the conventional mode. But in these uncertain days it is hardly safe to maintain a Gallio outlook and leave the shaping

¹ T. S. Eliot: *The Idea of a Christian Society* (Faber), pp. 36-7.

of opinion to others; if you thus close your mind and take no interest in the whirlpool of ideas, you are not entirely free from blame if laws about education are passed which are thoroughly repugnant to you. Samuel Johnson could say that he never slept an hour less for 'an absurd vote in the House of Commons,' but in these critical days we cannot afford to be indifferent. Discussion as a basis of public opinion is a vital factor in modern democracy, but without study discussion is an unprofitable and, indeed, a dangerous pursuit. That is why adult education, the most neglected of all branches of education, is so important in a democracy; it is the most effective way of ensuring that opinion is not based on windy rhetoric or biased propaganda but on knowledge and reflection. *Non in dialectica complacuit Deo saluum facere populum suum.* In the pages which follow various problems of school government are discussed and reference made to their historical context. It is hoped that, in spite of its obvious limitations, the book will be of some help in an introductory sense to those who wish to think about the issues involved.

CHAPTER II

THE CLAIM OF THE STATE

'He that neither knows what has been nor what is can never tell what must be nor what may be.' (*Harrington in 'Oceana.'*)

THE STATE THE FIRST TO CLAIM CONTROL OF EDUCATION

You sometimes hear people speak of State control of education as a German invention introduced into Prussia by Frederick the Great and subsequently imported into England in 1870. This is only partially true, because the State was in fact the first of all claimants to have its plea to govern education presented. 'Nothing moves in this world,' said Sir Henry Maine, 'which is not Greek in its origin'; and it was in Greece about two thousand years ago that the first experiments in State control were carried out. Their importance to anyone interested in problems of school management cannot be overstated, and their value is greatly enhanced because they are associated with some of the keenest thinking about the aims and content of education that there has ever been. Indeed, it is doubtful whether anyone administering education could find two more serviceable guides to his vocation than Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Politics*. In both, it is interesting to note, politics and education are dealt with as inseparables; and education is conceived as a training for good citizenship, while, contrary to modern town-planning practice, the planning and the education of the city-state are considered together as one problem. 'Political thought,' says Sir Ernest Barker, 'begins with the Greeks. Its origin is connected with what may be called the secularity of the Greek mind. Instead of projecting themselves into the sphere of religion, like the peoples of India and Judæa, instead of taking the world on trust, and seeing it by faith, the Greeks took their stand in the realm of thought, and daring to wonder about things visible, they attempted to conceive of the world in the light of reason.'¹

WHY THE GREEKS DECIDED ON STATE CONTROL

Secularity of mind gives us a subjective explanation of the Greek advocacy of State control, but there is also a factual

¹ Barker: *Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle*, p. 1.

explanation which is worth noting. It is necessary to summarise it very shortly, and this must be the excuse for venturing upon generalisations which inevitably mislead unless the details of the picture are subsequently filled in. The Greeks were an exceptionally gifted people who were engaged in a life-and-death struggle to prevent their absorption into the great Asiatic Empire of Persia: Marathon, Thermopylæ and Salamis—three of the decisive battles of history—were all part of this epic resistance. They lived in small city-states and they were very apt to quarrel with each other: the great civil war of Greek history, the Peloponnesian War, lasted for twenty-seven years. Ultimately the city-states of Greece became absorbed in the Macedonian Empire, which under Alexander the Great conquered half the world and thus spread far and wide a knowledge of Greek thought and ideals. Here, then, are the two principal explanations as to why the Greeks took so readily to a State system of education: (1) their secularity of outlook, (2) the constant threat to their existence. Their secularity can perhaps be best understood if one thinks of them as a religious people who on intellectual grounds almost discarded their legendary gods but requiring an object for their worship found it in the State. 'The city-state had become itself the Mother Goddess,' says Professor Gilbert Murray, 'binding together all who lived within its circuit and superseding all more personal worships.' The threat to their existence becomes also more obvious if it is recalled that they were not only always on guard against external foes, but they were also endangered by faction within; the intellectual qualities with which they were gifted engendered also a political restlessness which operated against civic solidarity. There was therefore a tendency always, sometimes more, sometimes less, for the Greek community to be 'like a garrison of civilisation amid wide hordes of barbarians,' and there was equally a tendency to yearn for some uniting internal force to make the State purposeful and its citizens conscious of their heritage. Remembering modern examples, one may perhaps surmise that the acceptance of the State as undisputed master of education is a symptom of a national anxiety complex.

STATE CONTROL IN SPARTA

The government of Sparta was in effect a military communism, and its main objective was to create a nation of soldiers.

'Sparta,' says Professor Dobson, writing before it was noted in 1932 before the full advent of Hitler and his Germany, 'is an example, unique among Aryan races, of an important state highly organised on principles of scientific savagery.' The Spartans themselves were always a minority in the State, and they had as the dominant race to ensure that they were at all times strong enough to keep the subject majority in order and at the same time be capable of garrisoning the country effectively against invasion. These political aims they sought to accomplish by means of a well-organised educational system which, to use our own jargon, was a perpetual national-fitness campaign. Babies with weak constitutions or otherwise physically defective were ruthlessly killed off by exposure. The fit were sent to boarding schools at the age of seven and brought up under a severe discipline in which a prefect system played a part. Physical training was the basis of the education, and its aim was good physique rather than excellence in games. Corporal punishment was an important feature of the discipline, and it was imposed, not only as a punishment, but as a method of teaching boys to endure pain. Boxing matches and other games calculated to foster pugnacious instincts were deliberately encouraged.

The attitude to women has also an interest for those who have noted similar tendencies in totalitarian creeds. Girls were regarded as a separate educational problem. They were not sent away to school, because it was felt that they would receive a more suitable training at home. But this home training was carefully designed to instil a sense of discipline and to secure a high standard of physical fitness. Motherhood was set before every girl as the highest ideal, and her chief civic duty was to contribute to the maintenance of a strong dominant race. The Spartan system of education was nothing if it was not thorough: it pursued vigorously and persistently its chief aim—to produce a nation of good soldiers. In this it succeeded, but it produced very few good generals. Internally, within the Garrison City, the government was strong and effective, but in her handling of foreign affairs, Sparta revealed the weakness of her narrow political and educational outlook.

THE ATHENIAN ATTITUDE TO EDUCATION

Before considering what the leading political thinkers of Greece had to say about the relationship between the State and

education, it is helpful to have some picture, however inadequate, of the Athenian educational landscape with which they were familiar. Education in Athens was much less an affair of the State than was the case in Sparta, nor had it a clear-cut political aim. The initiative rested largely with private enterprise, and there was no prescribed curriculum. But right back to the days of Solon, the first lawgiver, the State had required schools to conform to certain regulations, especially as to hours, numbers and school age. Endowments were customary, and there were attempts at what we would call a national salary scale for teachers. Although voluntary, the education of boys was almost universal, and parents were keen to give them the best that they could afford. Girls, however, scarcely came into the educational picture; though not perhaps wholly illiterate, the stress in their case was on knowledge of housekeeping. Athenian citizenship rested on a slave basis, and when we speak of education in Athens, it is important to remember that we are referring to a more or less leisured caste.

The aim of Athenian education was to develop character, enlighten the mind and train the body. Using our terminology, we can divide it into two stages: primary with an age-range of six to fourteen, and secondary with an age-range of fourteen to eighteen. The basis of the curriculum was reading, writing, simple arithmetic, poetry repetition, music and physical exercises, including swimming and dancing. Plato and Aristotle were familiar, not only with this school education, but also with the activities of those itinerant lecturers, the Sophists, who helped to gratify the Athenian's thirst for intellectual talk. Some of the Sophists were great teachers, and included among their number was Socrates, one of the greatest men of all time. They helped to make an educated nation. But a great many of the Sophists were nothing more than clever speakers who by encouraging talk for talk's sake injured the national character. 'They were,' to quote Professor Hearnshaw, 'the *intelligentsia* of their day, priding themselves on their complete emancipation from traditional religion and conventional morality, repudiating the claims of patriotism and citizenship, urging the right of the individual to unfettered freedom and full self-expression.'¹ They have given the word 'sophistry' to our vocabulary, and that provides a clue to the type of adult education some of them provided.

¹ Hearnshaw: *Development of Political Ideas* (Nelson), p. 10.

WHY PLATO ADVOCATED STATE CONTROL

Socrates was both a Sophist and a fierce enemy of sophistry. 'Where the Sophists,' says Sir Ernest Barker, 'had taught men to let themselves go along the lines of instinct, and to take everything which they could grasp, he taught men to discipline themselves into knowledge and to control themselves by wisdom.'¹ Plato was a disciple of Socrates, and the death of his great master at the hands of Athenian demagogues inspired in him, an aristocrat by birth, a loathing of mob rule. This provides the key to much of his teaching, as also does the fact that he taught at a time when a brake upon excessive individualism had become imperative. In his *Dialogues* he castigates opinions expressed by Sophists, much as our Bernard Shaw lashes in his plays some of the pretensions which passed for wisdom at the beginning of this century. His *Republic* aims at replacing individualism by a mild form of communism which has been likened to that of a monastery. Incidentally it may be noted that he has a poor opinion of democracy, and considers that it parades a false equality and encourages political selfishness. But his main contention is that the State depends for its character and strength on the education which its citizens receive; and in that sense his stress on education is stronger than his advocacy of communism. The latter is the form, while education is the creative force and the spiritual means of moulding a community. The detail of his educational theory is largely irrelevant to the theme which we are discussing, and any summary of it is misleading, because so much of its value lies in the nobility and grandeur of his argument. Happily, in addition to some excellent translations of Plato's writings, Nettleship's great 'Hellenica' essay on *The Theory of Education in Plato's Republic* is now—thanks to Mr. Spencer Leeson—available separately in a small volume. All that need be stressed here is that the central feature of Plato's argument is the supreme value of education to the State as the dynamic of good citizenship.

There are, however, some administrative aspects of his educational plan that are worth noting, as indicating how near and how far his views are from our own; e.g. elimination of parental control, girls to be educated as well as boys, compulsory education by the State, communal meals, State-paid teachers both men and women, censorship of school literature and music, State

¹ Barker: *Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle* (Methuen), p. 46.

provision of adult education, and the importance of a good school environment. Athens and Sparta both contributed to his theory of education. From Athens, he imbibed a respect for the individual: his aim was the development of the whole personality. From Sparta, he derived his belief in compulsion, State control and the social significance of education. 'It may,' says Sir Ernest Barker, 'be said to be Plato's aim to combine the curriculum of Athens with the organisation of Sparta, while informing it with a principle higher and wider than that of Sparta—the principle of justice—and continuing it to a later period of life, and into other and nobler studies, than Athens ever contemplated.'¹

ARISTOTLE DIFFERS FROM PLATO BUT AGREES THAT THE STATE SHOULD CONTROL EDUCATION

Aristotle was Plato's pupil, but he was also his critic. In Plato's writings you discern the poet, the mathematician and the idealist; in Aristotle you find the outlook of a trained biologist and a keen student of contemporary forms of government. Bosanquet says truly of Plato that it is difficult to 'place' him with reference to modern political tendencies: 'The only right course is to learn his great ideas sympathetically.'² On the major issue Plato and Aristotle are agreed: education should be controlled by the State and it should have a 'political' purpose. Aristotle, however, is essentially practical: he is an admirable 'clarifier' for anyone who wishes to think out for himself principles of educational administration. 'Plato,' said Sir Frederick Pollock, 'is a man in a balloon who hovers over a new land, and now and then catches a commanding view of its contours through the mist. Aristotle is the working colonist who goes there and makes the roads.'³ In the second book of his *Politics* he makes hay of the 'theorists,' and it is true that he engages in a fairly detailed criticism of his master's ideal commonwealth; Plato's disregard of the family, his communism of wives and children will, he maintains, destroy natural affection; his desire to make all citizens alike ignores, in Aristotle's judgment, the fact that differentiation of function is a law of nature. Aristotle concludes his criticism with the observation that by destroying family life

¹ Barker: *Political Thought in Plato and Aristotle*, p. 121.

² Bosanquet, *Education in Plato's Republic* (C.U.P.), provides a translation of the relevant portions of the *Republic*, 'and contains a valuable introduction and illuminating notes.'

³ Pollock: *History of the Science of Politics* (Macmillan, 1910), p. 16.

and private property, Plato deprives the rulers and their subjects alike of happiness.

The last chapter of his *Politics* opens with these words: 'No one will doubt that the legislator should direct his attention above all to the education of youth . . . the citizen should be moulded to suit the form of government under which he lives.' He devotes one-eighth of the book to the subject of education; and after making clear what sort of a state he wants, he plans his educational system with that end in view. The form of government which appears most to attract him might be described as a limited democracy. About democracy in an absolute sense he has considerable misgiving: it can so easily become government of the people by the poor for the poor. The aim of education should therefore be to make good citizens for such a community, and the method of doing so should be by training in those moral habits which are of value to the life of the community. His curriculum includes reading, writing and drawing for their utility; gymnastic because it produces valour; music, which if it were 'a mere amusement' should not be taught, as a moral discipline and national enjoyment. There is much in Aristotle's conception of education that resembles our own: he has, as we have, the aim of 'social individuality.' But there is a considerable difference of emphasis. 'The adjustment of the individual to the community,' says Sir Ernest Barker, 'the moral aim or instruction, are much more simply and directly present to his mind; and the use of artistic means to produce a direct effect is peculiarly Greek. Aristotle aims at producing by direct methods and conscious efforts a result which we either leave to indirect methods (as when we put our trust in the moral effect of games or of steady intellectual work), or to quiet, insensible influences like the public opinion of a school. He leaves less play for the action of the family, though, one gathers from the *Ethics*, he is alive to its importance, nor can he find in Greek religion, a matter of sacrifice and ceremony, that teaching and sanction of morality which modern life finds in Christianity. . . . He feels that morality must be *made*, because it is a matter of such vital importance to the State that it cannot be left to chance: we feel that morality must *grow*, and grow without the coercion of the State, because the 'Kingdom of Heaven must be taken' by every man for himself.'¹ There is one quality in Aristotle which anticipates an aspect of

¹ Barker: *Political Thought in Plato and Aristotle*, p. 425.

current educational thought: namely, his insistence on the importance of educating the emotional side of human nature. He continually emphasises the significance of social instincts, and especially the value of a feeling of 'affection' for the State or the community.

THE ROMAN ATTITUDE TO STATE CONTROL

Aristotle spent several years of his life as tutor to Alexander the Great, whose empire absorbed the city-states upon which Plato and Aristotle had lavished so much thought and wisdom. Their teaching, however, travelled in the wake of Alexander's armies and became known throughout the Western Orient, and as explained later Aristotle comes into prominence again in the Middle Ages as a powerful influence on Western political thought. Little more is heard during the remaining periods of ancient civilisation of the right of the State to take charge of education. For Rome, although its education was much influenced by Greek tradition and Greek teachers, never took kindly to the idea of State interference in the school world. The Roman tradition, as we shall note later, laid principal stress on the value of home training, and it was not until the last and decadent phases of Imperial Rome that the central government attempted to systematise education. Julius Cæsar began the policy of systematisation when he gave the franchise to all teachers of the liberal arts; and subsequently Vespasian and various private patrons endowed and provided schools. 'As a natural result,' says Mr. Murison, 'Government endowment ended in Government control. The early Emperors left the management of the schools alone, but the later Emperors interfered in the appointment and remuneration of teachers. Diocletian fixed the rate of payment for various subjects of instruction. When teachers became a privileged class, the Government restricted their number. In A.D. 425 an imperial edict made the Government the sole educational authority, and declared it a penal offence to open schools without permission.'¹ From that date until comparatively modern times—certainly for well over a thousand years—the idea of the State as the seat of authority in education was forgotten.

THE REVIVAL OF THE IDEA OF STATE CONTROL

During a great part of those thousand years political thought

¹ *Companion to Latin Studies* (C.U.P., 1910), p. 226.

was occupied with the rivalries of Church and Empire. But during the Renaissance and subsequently the idea of State control began to rouse itself from its long slumber, and it is significant that what brought it to life again was argument about sovereignty. It is interesting to notice also that Aristotle had some small part in the revival. For the vivid life of the Italian Communes was right in the centre of the Renaissance stage; and Communes were as like the Greek city-states as any form of human society that had existed since the days of Alexander. So it came about that Marsilio of Padua, when he discussed problems of sovereignty, wrote a treatise which is largely based on Aristotle and reproduces many of his ideas about citizenship. The Reformation broke up the universality of the Church, and let loose strong movements with a democratic trend which led to a continuance of political thinking about sovereignty and Church government. Into the arguments of the reformers crept the problem of education, and before long the question of a system of education became a live issue once again. From discussing education systematically it was a short step to the problem of control. Thus you get Melancthon declaring in Nuremberg that 'on the community lies the common duty to educate the youth of a city,' and you find John Knox endeavouring unsuccessfully in Scotland to secure a democratic educational system. This brings us close to England, where the Stuart regime opens with the control of education nominally assigned to the Church by the canons of 1604, but thirty-seven years later the Grand Remonstrance declares that 'the canons and power of canon-making are blasted by the votes of both Houses.' Subsequently 'the national duty of education was eagerly taken up by the Long Parliament in 1641, and though war caused them to abandon their design of a complete system, donations from confiscated Church lands were continually made for the maintenance of schools and schoolmasters. Treasury grants in aid of education were frequent in the period of Puritan rule.'¹ It is often forgotten that during the first half of the seventeenth century as many schools were founded as during a century of Tudor rule. But notwithstanding admirable suggestions prepared by Milton, Petty, Hartlib and others for the guidance of the Commonwealth legislators, 'the total achievement was small, the subject of education being continually postponed under the pressure of more urgent business and overwhelmed by political issues.'

¹ Trevelyan: *England under the Stuarts* (Methuen, 1912), p. 317.

THE FIRST ADVOCATES OF A STATE SYSTEM IN ENGLAND

It is doubtful whether sufficient importance has been attached to the early history of the idea of a national system of education in England. Its first associations have a profound bearing on its subsequent history, and yet they are often passed over and the origin of the idea attributed erroneously to events in the early nineteenth century. Its first advocates were reformers of the Cromwellian period, and it was thus aligned at the outset with the cause of democracy and also with certain aspects of Puritanism, notably the more independent elements. This helps to explain party attitudes subsequently and even up to the present time. Mr. G. M. Trevelyan assigns the 'birth of English democratic opinion' to those two momentous years 1647-8 when the country gentlemen, yeomen and craftsmen who constituted the officers and sergeants of the New Model Army took control of the opposition to the King. 'They produced in forms of English thought and speech the great ideas which perished with them, until, after a century and a half, Frenchmen won imperishable honour by making these aspirations the common heritage of all the white races of the world.'¹ They had two basic doctrines: equality of opportunity and the right of every Englishman to elect his rulers. Dr. A. D. Lindsay selects the same starting-point for our English democracy; quoting Colonel Rainborough's famous 'Really I think that the poorest he that is in England hath a life to live as the greatest he,' he adds, 'That is for those Puritans as for all true democrats the real meaning of human equality.'²

It would be helpful to know from what sources the early Puritans and the political 'levellers' of that day derived their belief in a State system of education. They were certainly not unaware of the views of Aristotle, for in 1654 there was circulated a news-sheet entitled *Observations on Aristotle's Book on Political Government*.³ But Aristotle had in the Middle Ages been too enthusiastically adopted by the Church for him to be acceptable to Puritans as a basis for a new social order. In the translation to England of the idea of State education, the part played by Harrington, the author of *Oceana*, is worthy of note. He was

¹ Trevelyan: *England under the Stuarts*, p. 281.

² Lindsay: *Essentials of Democracy* (O.U.P.), p. 13.

³ Barker: *Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle*, Appendix.

both a convinced Republican and a personal admirer of Charles I; but when the King had been executed he set to work to produce a Scheme of Government on which the influence of visits that he had paid to the Italian communes is apparent. 'No political writer,' said Mr. G. P. Gooch, 'has discerned with greater clearness the importance of education in the life and well-being of the State.' A better system of instruction had been the subject of one of the petitions of Milton to the Protector, and a scheme had been outlined in the 'Letter to Hartlib'; but Harrington came forward with practical proposals, anticipating in a very striking way the modern system of universal and compulsory education under the control of the State. It is interesting, as illustrating the attraction which the idea of State control had for the Puritan mind, to note that it was in 1647—the very year of Colonel Rainborough's famous saying—that the State of Massachusetts adopted what was the first democratic enactment of an educational system. 'The universal education of youth,' it declares, 'is essential to the well-being of the State; the obligation to furnish this education rests primarily upon the parents; the State has the right to enforce this obligation; the State may fix a standard which shall determine the kind of education and the minimum amount, a general tax may be levied, although school attendance is not general, to be used in providing such education as the State requires; education higher than the rudiments may be supplied by the State, and opportunity must be provided at public expense for youths who wish to be fitted for the University.'¹ This piece of democratic legislation gives a clear picture of the kind of educational system that the new democracy had as its objective; and it should be remembered that Massachusetts was the largest of the New England States, with about 15,000 settlers at that time. The law was in fact little more than the expression of an ideal, for it was never strictly enforced and eventually ceased to operate, until in 1852 Massachusetts again adopted a system of education, being the first of the American States to impose compulsory school attendance.

THE INFLUENCE OF COMENIUS

In tracing the development of the ideal of a comprehensive system of education during the Commonwealth period in England, it is important not to overlook the influence of the great

¹ Hans: *Principles of Educational Policy* (P. S. King, 1929), p. 5.

Moravian teacher, Comenius. It has been claimed that since ancient times he was the first to bring philosophy to bear on the subject of education. Montaigne and Bacon had advanced principles, but Comenius, who derived much of his thought from Bacon, definitely applied philosophy to practical educational problems. Persecuted in his own country, he was attracted to England by Samuel Hartlib, a Pole who had settled in this country, and in consequence of his democratic views had found his way into the inner councils of the Protectorate. Hartlib is described by Milton in his *Tractate on Education* as 'a person sent hither by some good providence from a far country, to be the occasion and incitement of great good to this island.' He was a great scheme-maker, and his invitation to Comenius was part of his endeavour to launch an educational system under the direction of the Commonwealth. Comenius' two principal works are the *Great Didactic* and *Janua*, which deal elaborately with various aspects of educational theory. But for our purpose the significant point is that Comenius was a strong advocate of a democratic system of education. 'We design,' he said, 'for all who have been born human beings, general instruction to fit them for everything human. They must, therefore, as far as possible be taught together, so that they may mutually draw each other out, enliven and stimulate. Of the vernacular school the end and aim will be, that all the youth of both sexes between the sixth and the twelfth or thirteenth years be taught those things which will be useful to them all their life long.' And again, 'Not only are the children of the rich and the noble to be drawn to the school, but all alike, gentle and simple, rich and poor, boys and girls, in great towns and small, down to the country villages. And for this reason. Everyone who is born a human being is born with this intent—that he should be a human being, that is, a reasonable creature ruling over the other creatures and bearing the likeness of his Maker.'¹

THE CLAIM OF THE STATE REASSERTED

With the passing of the Commonwealth the claim of the State to control education in England became dormant, and it finds no place in the Revolution Settlement of 1688. But that date is, in spite of this, important in the relationship between the State and

¹ See Quick: *Essays on Educational Reformers* (Longmans), pp. 119-71.

education, because it ushers in an entirely new phase of political thought associated with John Locke, a political thinker of the first magnitude. It was of some importance that he was not only a great political philosopher but that he was also deeply interested in educational theory. The future of education in this country was considerably affected by the eventual influence of his advocacy of tolerance, and the principles which he expounded ultimately left the Church, though established, much less exclusively privileged. An important development during the eighteenth century was the tendency of Nonconformity, which in the days of the early Puritans had been the first to press for a State system, to take the opposite view. Joseph Priestley, for example, a leading dissenter and educationist, in his *First Principles of Government*, borrows extensively from Rousseau and argues also that in the interests of freedom it is better that the State should not exercise a controlling power over schools. He himself was instrumental in setting up Dissenting Academies which he felt could flourish best if left alone by the State and its ally the Church.

'It can never be forgotten,' says Professor Laski, 'in the history of political ideas that the alliance of Church and State made Nonconformists suspicious of Government interference. Their original desire to be left unimpeded was soon exalted into a definite theory; and since political conditions had confined them so largely to trade, none felt as they did the hampering influence of State restrictions. The result has been a great difficulty in making liberal doctrinaires in England realise, until after 1870, the organic nature of the State. It remains for them almost entirely a police institution which, once it aims at the realisation of right, usurps a function far better performed by individuals.'¹ Thus State control lost its original advocate, and the antipathy of dissent and of liberal opinion generally to State interference accounts to some extent for the slow arrival of a State system of education in England and for the long reign of *laissez-faire* in our educational policy.

But the ideas which had attracted the early Puritans and the political 'levellers' received support from quite another quarter. There can be no doubt that the profound influence which Rousseau exercised, and still does, on our teaching methods was scarcely less than the encouragement which his political philoso-

¹ Laski: *Political Thought from Locke to Bentham* (H.U.L.), p. 149.

phy gave to a revival of belief in the necessity for State control, as a basis of individual liberty. He was a prophet of many impulses; no one has more stressed the advantages of individual teaching than he does in *Émile*, and throughout that remarkable *tour de force* there is an almost Roman belief in the educative influence of the family. But he was in other writings scarcely less enthusiastic about State control, notwithstanding the fact that he visualises in *Émile* education as divorced from communal influence and talks of cities as 'the grave of the human race.' 'Rousseau,' says Compayré, 'was divided all his life between the doctrine of individualism and that of socialism, between State sovereignty and man's liberty.' He says: 'The good social institutions are those which can best change man's nature, remove his absolute existence to replace it by a quite relative one. . . . It is by public education that minds are given a national form. . . . Public education, on lines prescribed by the Government, is one of the fundamental maxims of all popular government . . .' And again, in the *Encyclopædia* article on Political Economy: 'As each man's reason is not left sole arbiter of his duties, so much the less should children's education be left to the opinions and prejudices of fathers.'¹

Rousseau's influence in English education was twofold; much of the emphasis in the classroom on child study we owe originally to him; but outside, in the relationship between school and State, no one has more effectively gained support for the view that State control is the best way of ensuring the right of the child to equality of opportunity. 'Rousseau,' says Professor Laski, 'is the disciple of Locke; and the real difference between them is no more than a removal of the limitations upon the power of government which Locke had proposed. It is a removal at every point conditioned by the interest of the people. For Rousseau declared that the existing distribution of power in Europe was a monstrous thing, and he made the people sovereign that there might be no hindrance to their achievement in the shape of sinister interest. The powers of the people thus became their rights, and herein was an unlimited sanction for innovation. It is easy enough, then, to understand why such a philosophy should have been anathema to Burke. Rousseau's eager sympathy for humble men, his optimistic faith in the immediate prospect of popular power were to Burke the symptoms of insane delusion and their author

¹ Compayré: *Rousseau and Education from Nature* (Harrap, 1908), p. 35.

"the great professor and founder of the philosophy of vanity in England."¹

THE UTILITARIAN VIEW OF THE STATE IN RELATION TO EDUCATION

'Two great historical facts at the end of the eighteenth century, the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, profoundly modified the basis of political organisation. The modern state in consequence differs in many important respects from any that have preceded it. It does not rest on the common acceptance of authority, either religious, as did the mediæval state, or personal, as did the seventeenth-century state. Unlike the Greek city-state it is large. Its administration is concerned with millions who cannot be in personal relations to one another or share the same intensive life.'² Political thinkers in England, as elsewhere, became intensely aware of these millions as the nineteenth century proceeded, and when Napoleon had been disposed of it was generally realised that something had to be done about their education. Two contrasting strands soon appear in the web of their thought on this subject: (a) a humanist protest against the gospel of the Industrial Revolution; (b) a belief that everyone should carry in his satchel an industrial field-marshal's baton—that everyone should be able to rise, granted the necessary ability and diligence, to the prosperous peak of the industrial pyramid. The first idea, 'which inspired, in different forms, the teaching of Wordsworth and Mill, Coleridge and Carlyle, gave importance to education as a national need. But the same conclusion was reached by the school that simplified human nature, taking individual opportunity for its watchword, looking to the incentive of gain as the moving power.'³ Those who propounded these ideas differed on many points, but they were united in thinking that education was important.

That view having been more or less accepted, the question now resolved itself into one of the right approach to the 'education question.' Here there was great difference of standpoint, but broadly speaking, as Dicey maintains in his *Law and Opinion in*

¹ Laski: *Political Thought from Locke to Bentham* (H.U.L.), pp. 128-9.

² A. D. Lindsay: *Essay in Recent Developments in European Thought* (O.U.P.), p. 165.

³ J. L. and B. Hammond: *The Bleak Age* (Longmans; 1934), p. 82 (this book provides a masterly review of the social and educational background of the early nineteenth century).

England, the nineteenth century divides into two periods of political thought—individualism and collectivism. John Stuart Mill perhaps better than anyone else marks the half-way line, for in his latter years especially his individualism begins to wear a socialist hue. One might perhaps more simply differentiate between the two halves of the century by saying that while 'may' was a fashionable word up to 1850, subsequently 'must' was often preferred. The acceptance of the idea of universal education came slowly and fitfully, although quite early in the century Jeremy Bentham advocated it, especially with the aim of ensuring that even the poor received some moral teaching. He was, however, in this ahead of his time. 'For,' says Dr. Davidson, 'we must be careful not to read back into his day the widespread interest in the education of the masses that characterises the present age. On the contrary, there was little enthusiasm for general education then. Legislators and the ruling classes were afraid to educate the people, lest education should prove a danger to society; and they grudged the expense. Distrust of the people and selfish economy combined to maintain the existing order of things.'¹

We owe it therefore to literary giants like Carlyle, Wordsworth, Dickens and Ruskin, and to the development of utilitarian thought, that an interest in education was aroused which subsequently made possible a leap forward on universal lines. The position to which they ultimately brought the issue can best be illustrated by considering the view taken by John Stuart Mill. Briefly it was that while the State should not take charge of education, it should however compel parents to do their duty in the matter and if necessary assist them by paying the school fees. 'Were the duty,' says Mill in his essay *On Liberty*, 'of enforcing universal education once admitted, there would be an end to the difficulties about what the State should teach, and how it should teach, which now convert the subject into a mere battlefield for sects and parties, causing the time and labour which should have been spent in educating to be wasted in quarrelling about education. If the Government would make up its mind to require for every child a good education, it might save itself the trouble of providing one. It might leave it to parents to obtain the education where and how they pleased and content itself with helping to

¹ Davidson: *Political Thought in England: Bentham to J. S. Mill* (H.U.L.), p. 87.

pay the school fees of the poorer classes of children, and defraying the entire school expenses of those who have no one to pay for them. The objections which are urged with reason against State education do not apply to the enforcement of education by the State, but to the State's taking upon itself to direct that education, which is a totally different thing. That the whole or any large part of the education of the people should be in State hands, I go as far as anyone in deprecating. All that has been said of the importance of individuality of character, and diversity in opinions and modes of conduct, involves, as of the same unspeakable importance, diversity of education. A general State education is a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another, and as the mould in which it casts them is that which pleases the predominant power in the Government, whether this be a monarchy, a priesthood, an aristocracy or the majority of the existing generation; in proportion as it is efficient and successful, it establishes a despotism over the mind, leading by natural tendency to one over the body. An education established and controlled by the State should only exist, if it exist at all, as one among competing experiments, carried on for the purpose of example and stimulus to keep the others up to a certain standard of excellence.' Mill's essay *On Liberty* was written just after the middle of the century; the date has a significance in any estimate of the trend of opinion, though the essay itself belongs to all time, a masterpiece of clear expression and lofty thought.

The importance of the passage quoted lies in the distinction so clearly drawn between requiring and directing education: the case for demanding education for all is eagerly admitted, but the necessity for its freedom from external interference is as resolutely asserted. J. S. Mill's conception of liberty differs from that of the strict utilitarian view: not content with the mere provision of educational opportunity, he recognises the right of the individual child to that opportunity as a means of self-expression. 'From a conception of liberty,' says Sir Ernest Barker, 'as external freedom of action, necessary for the discovery and pursuit of his material interest by each individual, Mill rose to the conception of liberty as free play for that spiritual originality, with all its results in "individual vigour and manifold diversity," which alone can constitute a rich, balanced and developed society.'¹

Herbert Spencer, on the other hand, who had considerable

¹ Barker: *Political Thought in England, 1848-1914* (H.U.L.), p. 10.

vogue at the time when Mill was writing, resisted State interference with great bitterness. He was described by Mill himself as 'one of the most profound thinkers yet sprung from English philosophy, a man imbued with a truly scientific spirit.' But that spirit never enabled him to look upon education as the common right of every individual. He opposed State control, not so much as an encroachment upon individual freedom, but rather as a process which involved 'forced contributions local and general,' and moreover violated the principles of *laissez-faire* to which he assigned the attributes of a scientific law. But Spencer, in his bitter hostility to State action, was out of step with public opinion, and long before he wrote his most vehement indictment—*Man versus the State*—there was a general consensus of view that the State must somehow intervene in education on a comprehensive scale.

THOUGHTS ABOUT THE STATE AND EDUCATION IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO THE EDUCATION ACT OF 1870

It is difficult to discern now what leading people were thinking about education just before 1870, but there is a masterly summary of political thought at that time in chapters xi and xxii of Mr. Trevelyan's *British History in the XIXth Century*,¹ which read together show how the post-war searchings of heart after Waterloo lead on to educational legislation in the second half of the century. Much credit must be given to Bentham: 'Parliamentary, municipal, scholastic, ecclesiastical, economic reform all sprang from the spirit of Bentham's perpetual enquiry, "what is the use of it?"' Robert Owen is also important. A young Welshman, he made his way in the English and Scottish industrial world, and was thus an ideal example of 'self-help' so belauded by the money-making community. Beginning life with Tory sympathies, he tried to get Castlereagh to do something in the way of factory and educational reform. Castlereagh's deaf ear turned Owen into a democrat, who sought to establish and propagate his ideals through the new Co-operative movement. His New Lanark experiments in education had considerable influence on political thought in 1870, as also did the agitations associated with the Chartists.

There was an uncomfortable feeling among the well-to-do that it was dangerous to have millions of people frustrated and denied.

¹ G. M. Trevelyan: *British History in the XIXth Century* (Longmans, 1922).

On this aspect Disraeli was a great influence: he wrote his famous novel *Sybil* after witnessing the mess that the Industrial Revolution had made of the North of England, and he gave that novel significantly the sub-title *or the Two Nations*, i.e. the well-to-do and the rest. His 'Young England' crusade was in one sense a revolt against the selfish materialism of *laissez-faire*. 'Disraeli,' says J. A. Froude, 'did not believe any more than Carlyle that the greatness of a nation depended on the abundance of its possessions. He did not believe in a progress which meant the abolition of the traditional habits of the people, the destruction of village industries, and the accumulation of the population into enormous cities. . . . The only progress which he could acknowledge was moral progress, and he considered that all legislation which proposed any other object to itself would produce, in the end, the effects which the prophets of his own race had uniformly and truly foretold.'¹ It mattered a good deal that a man holding such views led the Opposition when Gladstone's Government presented the Education Bill of 1870, for it ensured that the party opposition to it was, beneath its partisan façade, not unsympathetic and that it was indeed antagonistic to *laissez-faire* sentiment on the Government side.

The political thought of the Church of England was also an important element; for as we have seen, it had not in the past been inclined to admit rivals in the sphere of education. Here an evolution had taken place. Gladstone himself was a giant of the Anglo-Catholic section, and by 1870 the best spirits of this movement had become almost as interested in social reform as in dogma and liturgy. Wilberforce had changed the tone of the Evangelicals, and his mantle had fallen on great laymen like Shaftesbury and the Buxtons, as to whose sympathies with proposals for social amelioration there was no doubt. The mid-century also witnessed the development of a 'Broad' Church school of thought, led by Kingsley and Maurice, who had a liking for the Chartists and preached a 'Christian Socialism.' Nor must we forget as influences in Christian thought great head masters like Arnold nor the poetry of Tennyson which was essentially Christian and at the same time alive to the social problems of the age. Of the Roman Church it was noteworthy that Manning was then Archbishop of Westminster, and he again had a humane social outlook, as his intervention in the dockers' strike some years

¹ Froude: *The Earl of Beaconsfield* (Dent, E.L.), p. 93.

later so emphatically revealed. An important factor also was the development of a more scientific way of thought: Darwin, Wallace, Huxley, Galton and others had influenced the political approach to problems, while historians like Stubbs and Freeman had encouraged a more exact method of estimating cause and effect. In the new approach to the education question, there was more social sympathy and a closer analysis of the various issues than would have been likely even ten years before.

As the frequent references to the practice of other countries in the debates on the Bill indicate, there was a strong feeling that England was lagging behind other nations in her reluctance to deal with education. Germany in particular was much in the popular mind, partly because she was proving her national vigour in her war with France. Not only had she had a State system since the days of Frederick the Great, but it was thought to be a sound system and one that had contributed greatly to national well-being. German political philosophy loomed large in the public mind; and both Kant and Hegel exercised a considerable influence on our political thought. Hegel's influence was especially powerful, and was the more acceptable because it embodied the Greek view familiar to English thought of the relationship of the individual to the State. He exalted the majesty of the State, and was very critical of the English readiness to concede rights to private and particular interests. The general effect of his teaching was to incline much English opinion towards a belief in more activity on the part of the State.

The full force of his influence came later in the century through the teaching of T. H. Green and Bosanquet. But it was of considerable importance in 1870 that political philosophy at the Universities was beginning to have Hegelian sympathies, and not without significance that T. H. Green, then a young Balliol tutor, was a member of the Schools Enquiry Commission of 1864. In the late 'sixties he gave several lectures to large audiences in the big cities, and it is remarkable how in his views on educational reform he harks back in his dictum and opinions to the Cromwellian period. 'A properly organised system of schools,' he observes at Edinburgh in 1866, 'would level up without levelling down. . . . As it was the aspiration of Moses that all the Lord's people should be prophets, so with all seriousness and reverence we may hope and pray for a condition of English society in which all honest citizens will recognise themselves and be recognised by

each other as gentlemen.' Or, again, speaking of Sir Henry Vane, the great Independent leader of the Commonwealth period, Green says: 'His enthusiasm died that it might rise again. "The people of England," Vane said on the scaffold, "have been long asleep. I doubt that they will be hungry when they awake." They have slept,' continued T. H. Green, 'another two hundred years. If they should wake and be hungry, they will find their food in the ideas which, with much blindness and weakness, Sir Harry vainly offered them, cleared and ripened by a philosophy of which he did not dream.' The 'philosophy' to which Green alluded was that of Hegel, and it is worth noting that the allusion definitely links the neo-Hegelianism which he himself expounded with the first promptings of English democracy in the seventeenth century.

CHAPTER III

THE EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE ENGLISH COMPROMISE

‘It were good that men in their Innovations would follow the example of time itself, which, indeed, innovateth greatly, but quietly, and by degrees scarce to be perceived.’ (*Bacon.*)

WHEN the architects of our English compromise—statesmen like Gladstone, Balfour, Forster and Fisher, and administrators like Kay-Shuttleworth and Morant—framed their Education Acts, they had to make their proposals harmonise with our strange and historic educational landscape. Thus they had to keep constantly in mind, not only many political considerations, but also the diversity of our educational tradition. Our statute law of education, a queer mixture of *étatisme* and particularism, is therefore unintelligible without some knowledge of our school tradition, to which so many different influences have contributed. Our schools in their variety reflect many phases of our social outlook and structure; they recall great movements and mighty cleavages of opinion. At the same time there is a unity—a British hallmark—which reveals them as members of one family, but a family which owes its strength to its spirit of independence and the sturdy individuality of its members. In this chapter an attempt will be made to indicate some of the main features of our composite educational personality.

EDUCATION BEFORE THE REFORMATION

The teacher's craft is an ancient one, and consciously or subconsciously he is always responding to a tradition which has come down from a distant past and has been modified and amplified in each succeeding generation. It is both a universal and a localised tradition; it has at once catholicity and nationality. Greece and mediæval Europe have contributed to it, and in the earlier days of English history none travelled farther afield with their wares than did members of the teaching profession. The story of Alcuin of York being called in by Charlemagne to reform education in his empire is typical of an age which did naturally what the British Council or the League of Empire does to-day

with considerable effort. Some made a habit of wandering; Master Adam of the twelfth century was nicknamed, because of this propensity, 'the English Peripatetic.' The great Monastic Orders, the chief mediæval educators, knew no patriotism other than that of their Order and the Church Universal, and University teachers exercised freely their *jus ubique docendi*. Chivalry shared with the Church the task of educating, and neither was fashioned to a national mould. The former was mainly a class affair, but the education offered by the Church was essentially democratic, drawing its pupils from all grades of society. Many of its poor scholars rose to positions of eminence: Grosstête, Bishop of Lincoln, the famous statesman of Henry III's reign, for example, was the son of a Suffolk peasant; Edmund Rich, Archbishop of Canterbury in the same period, born of poor parents of Abingdon, goes to Oxford at the age of twelve and later begs his way to Paris; Pope Adrian IV was the son of a lowly servant of the Abbey of St. Albans; while, on the other hand, John Kemp, Chancellor and Archbishop, who dealt so firmly with Jack Cade, came of a Kentish family which in our day would have looked to a leading public school for the education of its scions.

It is difficult to say how much of the education provided in the monasteries was secular: possibly it was often restricted to reading, writing and illuminating sacred literature. It is said indeed of the Cistercians of the twelfth century that they made no provision for teaching unconnected with the religious vocation. Walter Map, however, tells us of the eagerness which villeins showed to obtain education for their sons, and there is ample evidence that the twelfth-century renaissance led to the foundation of a number of schools. 'Buildings for the school were supplied by the see or religious foundation with which it was connected; but the master was usually paid by the fees of the scholars, and if a boy received his education gratis, it was at the master's expense.'¹ Cathedrals, monasteries and parish churches created such schools, and from this development several Grammar Schools came into being. The education of Chivalry was mainly out-of-door: the page was, according to theory, grounded in the 'seven free arts'—riding, swimming, boxing, hawking, archery, chess and verse-making—while the monastic schools built up their curriculum of 'the seven liberal arts' on grammar,

¹ Davis: *England under Normans and Angevins* (Methuen, 1905), p. 193.

logic, rhetoric, music, geometry, astronomy and arithmetic. Chivalry aimed at producing soldiers and feudal administrators, and its stress was on character, 'trouthe and honour, fredom and curtesie'; while the monastic schools sought to produce statesmen, clergy, clerks and accountants.

Before the close of the Middle Ages the Grammar Schools had taken firm root, and it is estimated that there were about three hundred of them by the end of Edward III's reign; and here again the mingling of classes is noticeable, not merely as a fact, but also as a definite policy. Winchester was originally intended to fill gaps in the priesthood after the Black Death by educating poor boys for this service, but planned by William of Wykeham it soon grew into a more comprehensive institution. 'He meant it to be, first, a place of preparation for further study, and therefore founded it in close connection with New College, Oxford. It was to be, secondly, a place in which the older helped the younger, and he designed a rudimentary prefect system; it was his expressed purpose that eighteen of the more advanced boys should both exercise control and give instruction. Thirdly, the life was to be corporate, and this was to extend both to work and to play. That corporate life was to be shaped and inspired by an ideal of character, the formation of which was to be the main object of the education given, and he expressed this in the famous motto that "Manners makyth man." Fourthly, he contemplated a mixture of classes, and a career open to talent of whatever origin.'¹

SOME CONSEQUENCES OF THE REFORMATION

There is reason to believe that general education before the Reformation was much better than it was for very many years after that disruptive event. 'I have often found,' says Thorold Rogers, 'in searching among the relics of pre-Reformation papers, bills for work done written out by country artisans, smiths, carpenters, masons and the like, in which the spelling is better than it was three centuries later, and the charges are properly calculated. Such persons must have had some education in reading, writing and arithmetic.'² It is a popular habit to associate the origins of our educational provision with the Renaissance and the Reformation, and to believe that the Revival

¹ Norwood: *The English Tradition of Education* (1929), p. 61.

² Thorold Rogers: *The British Citizen*, p. 124.

of Learning had a most beneficent influence upon educational policy. J. R. Green, for example, draws a delightful picture of new Grammar Schools springing up in various parts of the country as a result of Colet's foundation of St. Paul's, and makes one feel that the work which Lily did as head master there was typical of new endeavours all over England. 'Not only,' he says, 'did the study of Greek creep gradually into the schools, but the example of Colet was followed by a crowd of imitators. More Grammar Schools, it has been said, were founded in the latter years of Henry VIII than in the three centuries before. The impulse grew only stronger as the direct influences of the New Learning passed away. The Grammar Schools of Edward the Sixth and of Elizabeth, in a word, the system of middle-class education which, by the close of the century, had changed the face of England, were amongst the results of Colet's foundation of St. Paul's.'¹ This is, however, a doubtful picture, and it would probably be more true to say that the Act which dissolved chantries damaged education quite as much as the transference of some endowments to found new Grammar Schools benefited it. This at least would seem to have been the contemporary view, for in 1562 we find the Speaker of the House of Commons urging upon the Queen the need for schools and submitting that for lack of them the people are growing obstinate. Nor can Green's description of Grammar Schools as centres of middle-class education be accepted: it is an application of a modern view of society to an age in which class consciousness was vastly less than it is to-day. 'In those frugal days,' says Mr. Trevelyan of the beginning of the seventeenth century, 'the sons of leading county families were sometimes sent first to the village school and afterwards to the grammar school of the neighbouring town, as John Hampden was sent to Thame. There, sitting on the bench with the cleverest sons of farmers and townspeople, the young gentleman learnt many things more useful to the governor of a country than the aristocratic tone and exclusive ideas of a modern Public School.'² Again, the tendency of the Grammar Schools to become places in which a curriculum of Latin and Greek grammar with some formal study of classical texts was the rule did much to destroy the democracy of educa-

¹ J. R. Green: *History of the English People*, chap. vi, section iv, p. 309 (edition, 1889).

² Trevelyan: *England under the Stuarts*, p. 14.

tion. 'The inevitable consequence was this: education became a mere synonym for instruction in Latin and Greek. The only idea set up for the "educated" was the classical scholar.'¹

Cranmer seems to have foreseen the tragedy of a divided nation which needs must result from the educational situation created by the Reformation, for he strongly pressed for the admission to the Grammar Schools of pupils from all the elements of society. It was a serious issue, for not only were the people deprived of the facilities formerly offered by the monastic schools, but the great majority were permanently differentiated from their fellow citizens for lack of Grammar School learning. 'The Renaissance and the Reformation,' says Sir Cyril Norwood in a masterly summary of the position, 'were both disintegrating influences. The Renaissance by itself might have been an inspiration, for it brought in a more living curriculum, and more valuable subjects of study. But it also brought with it much individualism, and questioned the principles of the old loyalties to Church and State. It was the Reformation which in this country dealt the hardest blow to education. It broke up the unity of the nation. The Catholics were outlawed and persecuted, and the Protestants broke into sects. Many schools were plundered and destroyed, and a spirit of self-seeking, of private profit to be made at the expense of the public benefit, was let loose. By the end of the reign of Elizabeth, many of the schools were re-founded, but in a different spirit, with smaller resources and less opportunity. They were for one class—the sons of the members of the Established Church. There was no access for the sons of Catholics and Nonconformists. The old ideals were lost sight of, and the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are a dark period in the history of English education. A Milton or a Locke might theorise about education, but the inside of the schools of the nation was given over to a narrow curriculum of much Latin and a little Greek, handled with increasing stupidity by clerical pedagogues of low status. Many seem to have had no higher ideals than to teach grammar and repetition with the aid of the birch. Their pay was a pittance, their classes impossibly large, and they left their boys to shape their own characters. Here and there, *rari nantes in gurgite vasto*, were nobler spirits, but the nation as a whole was surrendered to a hard-and-fast system of privilege, the government of a political oligarchy, and to a

¹ Quick: *Essays on Educational Reformers*, p. 8.

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system of thought in which spiritual values had been largely forgotten.¹

DOES STATE CONTROL PREVENT EXPERIMENT AND INITIATIVE?

'The academies,' says Bagehot, 'are asylums of the ideas and taste of the last age.' There is a good deal of truth in this, and it is perhaps inevitable that in Universities and schools the subject-matter to which students and pupils address themselves must be of the past rather than the present. The belief that Universities are the breeding-ground of new ideas is difficult to maintain, though often asserted at University gatherings. Certainly most of the radical influence in education has come from without, and changes have been due more to the political arena than to the class or common room. Probably the most fertile source of advance has been discussion and resultant public opinion. But in general it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the governing and teaching elements in universities and schools are by nature almost obstinately loyal to the past.

Classical humanism, though a creation of the Renaissance, did not enter the school curriculum until the Greek revival in Germany and the subsequent humanistic revival at Oxford had created a generation of schoolmasters who in the nineteenth century transformed classical teaching in the schools of this country. Similarly the great geographical discoveries of the sixteenth century took an unconscionable time to penetrate classroom walls, and had little or no influence until after Huxley and others had forced educational thought to incorporate scientific studies in the curriculum, during the latter part of the nineteenth century. The slow acceptance of science as a branch of learning is as remarkable as the delay in humanising the classical tradition: for science had its prophets not much later than did the new humanism and, indeed, there is a lineal connection. If the schools had hearkened to Lord Bacon, science would have been in the curriculum at least two centuries before it made its bashful entry. For his *New Atlantis*, published at the end of James I's reign, is one of the most fascinating of educational Utopias, revealing a great mind, profoundly impressed by the wonders of the universe and fully alive to the significance of scientific research in the realm of knowledge.

But just as a stream rising in some high mountain often pursues

¹ Norwood: *The English Tradition of Education*, pp. 12-13.

a vacillating and circuitous course before it becomes the great river of the fertile valley below, so the scientific movement which Bacon so eloquently heralded meanders hither and thither before it finds its way into the school curriculum. The Royal Society came quickly enough as a consequence of his advocacy, but if it had not been for a few faithful apostles, all hope in natural science would have been dead in England within a century following his decease. Abraham Cowley reminds people about it just after the Restoration, while Sprat about the same time recalls that in Lord Bacon's writings are 'everywhere scattered the best arguments that can be produced for the defence of Experimental Philosophy.' But it was on the Continent that the influence of Lord Bacon was kept alive, and during the early part of the eighteenth century most of the scientific societies founded abroad look on him as their prophet. Eventually Diderot, Voltaire and D'Alembert bring him right back into the centre of the stage through their famous encyclopædia. 'It was,' says John Morley, 'Francis Bacon's idea of the systematic classification of knowledge which inspired Diderot, and guided his hand throughout. "If we emerge from this vast operation," Diderot wrote in his Prospectus, "our principal debt will be to Chancellor Bacon, who sketched the plan of a universal discovery of sciences and arts at a time when there were not, so to say, either sciences or arts."'¹ Doubtless the encyclopædia aroused some discussion in school common rooms, but there is no evidence that it influenced teaching. In 1783, however, the University of Cambridge established a chair of natural philosophy, and there were a few men like Joseph Priestley, who began his career as a teacher in a Dissenting Academy at Warrington, who saw the potentialities of science as a school subject. It is interesting to notice that during that period Sprat's *History of the Royal Society* was in the Warrington School Library catalogue.

It was not, however, until the middle of the nineteenth century that the teaching of science began to progress. In the 'fifties the Natural Science Tripos was established at Cambridge, which had the Prince Consort as its Chancellor; and it was at this period also that there grew up a kind of alliance between political Liberalism and the cause of science. Professor Trevelyan notes that in the General Eyre controversy of 1866 Darwin and Huxley were both on the side of the Liberals in their protest against the

¹ Morley: *Diderot* (1914), vol. I, p. 120.

negro repression in Jamaica. The position reached during the later Victorian period has been summed up by Professor Archer: 'The vast bulk of candidates for honours at the old universities were still studying the humanities or mathematics, the provincial colleges even where they existed had not yet attained university rank, the secondary schools scarcely taught science at all, there were few teachers of science and most of these had received a very narrow training, the smatterings of facts taught in a few elementary schools could not be called scientific teaching, and technical instruction was sadly deficient.'¹ It was not until the influence of Darwin, who published the *Origin of Species* in 1859, and of Huxley, who was busy at South Kensington about 1870, had permeated the popular mind that the seeds which Bacon had sown began to bear fruit in English schools. It was yet another instance of public opinion at long last overcoming hostility and apathy in academic circles. The great reforming head masters were thoroughly inhospitable in their attitude to science. 'Rather than have Physical Science,' said Dr. Arnold, 'the principal thing in my son's mind, I would gladly have him think that the Sun went round the Earth, and that the Stars were merely spangles set in a bright blue firmament.' Typical of the schoolmaster's attitude was that of the great Kennedy at Shrewsbury, who refused the customary half-holiday for a 'First' because it was 'only in science.'²

THE COUNTRY HOUSE TRADITION

The persistent neglect of popular education by the English governing classes right up to the nineteenth century finds some measure of explanation in one aspect of the Renaissance. For numerous pedagogic treatises which it inspired convey a general impression that humanism is meant only for persons of high degree. Most of them hark back to Quintilian who, declared Erasmus, 'has said in effect the last word on the matter'; and their aim is to show how the new learning should be taught to pupils who by birth are destined to occupy authoritative positions. They are virtually manuals for the guidance of tutors and chaplains entrusted with the task of training the young of the privileged caste; and thus their view of the social structure is the

¹ Archer: *Secondary Education in the XIXth Century* (O.U.P., 1921), p. 139.

² *Post-Victorians*: article on Sir Charles Parsons by E. K. Clark (Ivor Nicholson & Watson, 1933), p. 507.

complete opposite of Colonel Rainborough's 'the poorest he that is in England hath a life to live as the greatest he.'

It was in the Italian city-states, the homeland of the Renaissance, that this association of humanism with gentility originated. For the great merchant princes of Florence, Venice, Padua and other cities were foremost in cultivating the study of antiquity and restoring to civilisation knowledge which recalled the greatness of Rome. They engaged tutors for their children, and sometimes these city magnates joined together in maintaining a school, sumptuously equipped, in which their children received an education in harmony with the new ideals of the Quattrocento. Of the tutors, none was more esteemed than Vittorino da Feltre, employed at Mantua by the Gonzaga family, who, having recently attained wealth and importance, desired to consolidate the position which their family had struggled to attain. Of Vittorino it would be irrelevant to say more here, but a charming description of his character and his work will be found in the second volume of J. A. Symond's *Renaissance in Italy*. His writings and those of several other Italian scholars had considerable influence in England, and they encouraged that view with which we are now familiar, that there was an exclusive social caste—a Society—whose educational needs were different from those of the rest of the community. For the most part they looked to the great landed families to provide the pupilage of this aristocratic education, but they did not forget that, as in the case of the Italian merchant princes, power and position could sometimes exist apart from the big estates. Their political creed resembled that which four hundred years later Disraeli propounded in *Sybil*—government by an intelligent aristocracy; but with this difference, that it did not concern itself also, as Disraeli's did, with the condition of the people.

This Italian outlook found its best expression in this country in the writings of Sir Thomas Elyot, notably in *The Boke called the Governour* and its female counterpart, *The Defence of Good Women*. 'The object of *The Governour*,' says Mr. Woodward, 'was to instruct men in such virtues as shall be expedient for them, which shall have "authority in a weal public." It is hardly a political treatise; it makes no attempt to set out the methods of government. It is not a sketch of a perfect State, Elyot has always England and Englishmen in his mind; but he undoubtedly has a forward look. He realised, as the need of an age

marked by a revolution in political organisation and administration, a sounder concept of training for the sons of the governing class. The ideal of service of the State, lay and civil, was a new one in England, and Elyot saw that it would surely claim its place beside the older ideals of service through arms or 'clerkship,' and ultimately surpass them in importance, as the ecclesiastical and feudal territorial privileges yielded to the authority of the King's Court. Italy alone offered examples of such political conditions, the subordination of landed right to new powers, civic, industrial and personal; it was natural, therefore, that from Italy too should come the literary presentation of the modern community, and of the education which should fit its citizens or princes for their share in it.¹

Such writings as those of Sir Thomas Elyot fostered the idea that the governing classes, men and women, required a special brand of learning, and implied also that the rich treasures of the Renaissance were the heritage of this privileged minority. Indeed, it is probable that this attitude helped to deflect the complex culture of the new humanism from the main stream of English educational thought into the family life of the great houses. It raised their standard of taste, kindled their pride in their picture galleries, enriched their libraries and encouraged them to reproduce in their 'stately homes' the artistic and cultural background which the wealthy Italians of the Quattrocento had created. Sir Thomas Hoby's *The Courtyer*, translation of a famous Italian book on courtesy, helped at the same time to establish in illustrious circles a distinctive code of manners, and a special regard for deportment, gesture and intonation. With all this, especially in the training of the heir, went a Roman pride of family and some of that sense of discipline, duty and administrative capacity reminiscent of the education which Cato the Censor provided in ancient times for his children in his Roman villa.

On the other hand, the exclusiveness of such educational theory helped to stratify our social structure, and to establish a belief that education was a class affair. With all his enlightenment John Locke, at the end of the seventeenth century, so far conforms to this pedagogic tradition as to set down his *Thoughts on Education* for the benefit of gentlemen only, and to produce a separate tract to convey his views on the education of the

¹ Woodward: *Education during the Renaissance* (C.U.P.), 1924, pp. 270-1.

working classes. The breadth and tolerance of his philosophy did not prevent him from being the apostle of that oligarchic parliamentary rule which enabled the great Whig families to dominate England in the days when the Cavendishes and the Russells were all-powerful. 'I think,' says Locke, 'a prince, a nobleman or an ordinary gentleman's son should have different ways of breeding.' 'From the seventeenth century onwards,' says Miss Wodehouse, 'men felt themselves in a new world, not fitted by any mere repetition of what satisfied the old. The seventeenth century indeed had questioned and replied so bitterly and bloodily, in England and in Europe, that a temporary exhaustion followed, and the eighteenth seemed on the surface a quiet conservative time. Enlightenment, and an aristocratic freedom from bondage to tradition, became itself a tradition of good form. The custom of travel had come back with peace: great lords and rich squires from England made the Grand Tour, and mixed with the nobility of France and Italy. They had good breeding, knowledge of the world, and a love of reputation, as Locke had desired, and some of them certainly had virtue and industry as well. Wit adorned their conversation, and constant practice qualified them for the concerns of their life. "They look down on us, these fortunate beings, from the canvases of Gainsborough and Reynolds, with a self-satisfaction triumphantly justified."'¹ Rousseau, the Napoleonic Wars, the Industrial Revolution, the Chartists, disturbed the complacency of their descendants and enabled a majority to agree in 1870 that something must be done about providing education for the people.

THE TRADITION OF DISSENT

Dissent has played an adventurous part in the remoulding of English society and its government, and it is doubtful whether sufficient importance has yet been attached to its influential educational tradition. The compromise of 1870 certainly cannot be appreciated unless the significance of the story of Dissent is recognised, because more than any other cause it explains the variform and flexible character of the present system of education. In the Middle Ages men thought politically in terms of universals, but after the Reformation English people assumed that the nation and its religion were both units and coterminous, the nation and the Church. Sir Ernest Barker, in his *Oliver Cromwell*, has

¹ Miss Helen Wodehouse: *History of Education* (Arnold, 1930), p. 100.

christened it a doctrine of equivalence after the manner of Hooker, who spoke of the equivalence of people, commonwealth and Church. 'Now in 1641,' Sir Ernest's argument proceeds 'there were two schools of opinion which both accepted this doctrine, but none the less differed from one another. There were the Anglicans who believed that all England should be a single Anglican Church, episcopally governed, and following a modified form of the old mediæval ritual. There were the Presbyterians or Calvinists, who believed that all England should be a single Presbyterian Church, governed by presbyteries and synods of presbyteries, and following the new ritual of Geneva. . . . But between them both, or over and above them both, there remained a *tertium quid*. This was the Independents; in other words, the members of the Free Churches; in other words again—to mention their two great main varieties—the Congregationalists and the Baptists. The essence of their position was that they denied what I have called the doctrine of equivalence. . . . They did not believe that a single political society was, or ought to be, a single religious society. They did *not* profess the doctrine of religious territorialism. They were essentially and literally Nonconformists. They believed that any voluntary society of Christian men and women, in any area or neighbourhood in which they were gathered together, should be free to form their own congregation and to constitute their own Free Church.'¹

It was the vitality of this doctrine and of the men who tenaciously held it which made it necessary for Parliament, before it could put a national plan for education on the statute book, to find some acceptable way of ensuring freedom of choice in education. Hence our system of State-provided and State-aided Voluntary Schools, and that curious Conscience Clause which has to be displayed like a tattered banner of liberty within the portals of every Elementary School.

The dissenting tradition in education passed through four distinct phases between its birth in 1640 and the passing of the Education Act 1870: (a) the Commonwealth period of planning programmes of reform, (b) the Restoration period of bitter persecution, (c) the period of relaxed persecution after the settlement of 1688, (d) the final phase during which it flourished and gradually merged into a general movement for freedom, reform and scientific progress in schools and universities. The

¹ Barker: *Oliver Cromwell* (C.U.P.), pp. 30-3.

Commonwealth period fashioned the mould of the dissenting tradition, fixing certain characteristics which in the main it retained during its subsequent vicissitudes. Hartlib, that rather odd Polish exile, who delighted in schemes and wire-pulling on their behalf, gave it that *realschulen* bias which from the first distinguished it from the Grammar School tradition. He wrote tracts on elementary, secondary, higher and technical education, and pressed the claims of science teaching. Comenius' influence is constantly at work, emphasising the breach with the classical tradition, endeavouring to bring education more into touch with life and reminding the Reformers constantly of the significance of Francis Bacon and the importance of natural philosophy. He is a whole-hearted advocate of teaching 'things' as well as words, and it is important to remember that the writings of this great Czech and the schools of Moravia had a profound influence later upon John Wesley's concept of education. Sir William Petty, economist, pioneer statistician, lover of music and an original member of the Royal Society (1662), also stresses the need for realism in education, and among his ideas are as a necessary feature of every school a 'gymnasium mechanicum' and a 'theatrum botanicum.' John Dury, born in Edinburgh and with several Continental contacts, including Prussia and Sweden, was another active member of this reforming band. He makes a plea for good training of teachers, believes in coeducation, has thoughts about nursery education, and leaves behind as his magnum opus, *The Reformed School*. Not least in interest among the projects which his vivid fancy created, was the idea of Christian Associations which were apparently to fulfil the purpose of active governing bodies of his 'Reformed Schools,' which were to be communal and residential.

This constellation of reformers had one star of the first magnitude, none other than John Milton, and happily he has bequeathed to us a *Tractate on Education* from which we can guess what he thought about these various suggestions for educational reform. Wordsworth's description of him, 'Thy soul was like a star and dwelt apart,' always seems a little misleading when one remembers how active Milton was in the political and social intercourse of his time. But it certainly is a perfect summing up of the position he takes in this welter of suggestions for educational reform. His tractate is an eight-page pamphlet, written at Hartlib's request, in which he sets forth views which he has long

held about education, 'one of the greatest and noblest designs that can be thought on, and for want thereof this Nation perishes.' He refers to Comenius with a note almost of disdain, and quite definitely rejects the strictly realist approach to education. He is clearly on the side of *literæ humaniores* in the noblest and most generous sense. Space does not permit reference to the detail of his proposals, many of which most teachers would find it necessary to reject as impracticable. His significance in the dissenting tradition is threefold: (1) he gave it the lustre of his immortal name, (2) his influence assured attention to the humanities, (3) his lofty conception of the aims of education, as expressed in the tractate, left its mark on the character of the Dissenting Academies and has enriched English educational thought. His definition of education is so often quoted that it has become part of our household philosophy: 'I call a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war.' When he wrote these words, the Parliamentary army was besieged at York, and in less than a month Roundheads and Cavaliers were fighting the Battle of Marston Moor.

The second phase of the dissenting tradition belongs to the aftermath of the Restoration. The educational reformers have been summarily ejected from the seats of the mighty, and Hartlib is busy penning begging letters to rescue his family from destitution. 'The heroic age of England,' says Mark Pattison, 'had passed away, not by gradual decay, by imperceptible degeneration, but in a year, in a single day, like the winter's snow in Greece.' The Clarendon Code by the Corporation Act excluded these pioneers of freedom from public life; by the Conventicle Act it prevented them from worshipping together; by the Five Mile Act it barred them from the centres of population; and by the Act of Uniformity it stopped them from functioning as Ministers of Religion or from 'instructing or teaching youth in any private house or family as tutor or schoolmaster.' All the doors of progress, as they conceived it, were locked and shuttered, but there were stout hearts among them who could understand what John Bunyan meant when he said:

'He who would valiant be
'Gainst all disaster,
Let him in constancy
Follow the Master.'

Milton and Bunyan, two such different pilgrims, illustrate by their sufferings the burden which had fallen upon those who were destined to keep alive the dissenting tradition through these dark days. 'Two men were struck with almost equal violence by that overwhelming shock,' says Mr. H. W. Nevins, 'men living apart, ignorant of each other's existence, different in class, very different in knowledge, but possessed by the same indignant and resisting spirit, and destined to produce the two works which redeem and illuminate those years of dark overthrow and obstinate defeat. Milton was driven from public life into blind and poor obscurity. Bunyan lay twelve years in gaol for conscience' sake.'¹ The pains and penalties of the Clarendon Code did not, however, prevent teachers, prepared to take the risk, from conducting "academies," and it was in this period that the institution shaped itself as a living protest against privilege and intolerance. Gradually it still further strengthened its position, outrivalling the Grammar School on the two important points of educational and moral standards. For this triumph against adversity Miss Parker, in her valuable survey of the rise and progress of dissenting academies, gives three reasons: (1) Nonconforming ministers and laymen would not send their sons to the universities, where they would have to make a declaration of conformity; (2) the ejected clergy were chiefly men of ability and therefore provided excellent teaching staff; (3) parents soon realized that they received good value for their money.² The fees were low: tuition approximately £5 and board £16 per annum; while residence at Oxford or Cambridge involved an annual expenditure of about £150, unless the student was very economical. Apart, however, from material considerations, there was the dynamic of faith; Tertullian's *semen est sanguis Christianorum* applied to ventures which called for such moral courage.

The academies thus established their own position in spite of—and to some extent, because of—repressive legislation, but they were assisted in their development by the judgment given in Bates' case in 1670 (not to be confused with the famous revenue case of Bate of 1606) which enabled schoolmasters to teach without episcopal licence if nominated by the founder or lay patron of the school. Generally speaking, the age of admission

¹ Nevins: *Between the Wars* (Hutchinson), p. 35.

² Parker: *Dissenting Academies in England* (C.U.P.), p. 48.

to the academies at this period was late, fifteen and over; and they were regarded largely as alternatives to the university, leaving less advanced education to be carried out at home or in dissenting schools of elementary type. The academy curriculum therefore was at first designed for fairly advanced students, and it bears considerable evidence of the influence of Comenius' realism. Among the subjects are Divinity, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, logic and rhetoric; and also mathematics, science, geography, history and anatomy. The Revolution settlement of 1688, although the Act of Toleration was far from being tolerant, made matters a good deal easier for the academies. 'It is true,' says Macaulay, 'that the Toleration Act recognised persecution as the rule, and granted liberty of conscience only as the exception. But it is equally true that the rule remained in force only against a few hundreds of Protestant dissenters, and that the benefit of the exceptions extended to hundreds of thousands.'¹ As a consequence the academies now become the theme of open controversy, pro and con; Defoe, for example, as an old pupil of the Stoke Newington Academy, champions their cause and commends their modern curriculum, saying that it made him master of five languages and introduced him to mathematics, natural philosophy, logic, geography, history and 'politics as a science.' *Robinson Crusoe* certainly shows signs of Baconian influence, and recalls *New Atlantis*, but whether the eminent divines who presided over the academies would claim that Moll Flanders or Roxana were heiresses of their educational philosophy is doubtful. They do at least reflect a new realism, and the academies can surely claim some credit for the incomparable journalism of which Defoe was master. His essay upon the *Education of Woman* is too often forgotten, for it is a pioneer work of some importance. 'I have often thought of it,' he says, 'as one of the most barbarous customs in the world, considering us as a civilised and a Christian country, that we deny the advantages of learning to women. We reproach the sex every day with folly and impertinence; which I am confident, had they the advantages of education equal to us, they would be guilty of less than ourselves.'

Among the enemies of the academies are some of their past pupils; the few who delight in fouling their own cradles are to be found in every age. Two famous Tory statesmen, Harley and

¹ Macaulay; *History of England* (Dent, E.L.), vol. II, p. 281.

St. John, belong to this galley, and both were old pupils of the Shropshire Academy at Sheriffhales; they were largely responsible for the Schism Act of 1714, 'this atrocious Act,' as Lecky describes it. Another zealous critic was Samuel Wesley who, like Defoe, was an old pupil of the Stoke Newington Academy. He had abandoned dissent and conformed, and after the manner of converts was intensely ardent in his opposition to dissent. This perhaps accounts for his making a grievance of the fact that one of the academies had 'a laboratory, and some not inconsiderable rarities with air-pump, thermometer, and all sorts of mathematical instruments.' In this opposition there can be detected a feeling which afterwards played a considerable part in 'the education question'; namely, a coupling of the dissenting tradition with the rationalism derived from Locke, a scientific outlook and a tendency to agnosticism. The story of the Shropshire vicar who did not know whether to call on his new neighbour, Charles Darwin, illustrates this attitude; the acquaintance of Darwin as a gentleman was essential, but as a man of science was unthinkable. It was in Queen Anne's reign that the Tory Party first became anxious about this rising tide, and the Schism Act, repealed five years later, was an expression of this view. 'They cannot agree,' says Dean Swift, justifying his Tory friends, 'that the truth of the gospel and the piety and wisdom of its preachers are a sufficient support, in an evil age, against infidelity, faction and vice without the assistance of the secular power. . . . They want a little enlargement of assistance from the secular power against atheists, deists, Socinians and other heretics.'

Although the Schism Act was short-lived, the Act of Uniformity remained, and just after the accession of George II a practice was begun of indemnifying by Act of Parliament dissenters who offended against the Clarendon Code. 'A curious English practice,' Maitland comments, 'it amounts to saying "We will not repeal the law, but it is understood that nobody need keep it."' ¹ So it comes about that, although by the middle of the eighteenth century dissent has cast off many fetters, Blackstone still speaks of 'the crime of nonconformity.' There was, however, a growing tolerance at this period, and it led to a development of the dissenting academies, which now became an important middle-class institution. Among the greatest of their

¹ Maitland: *Constitutional History of England* (C.U.P.), p. 516.

advocates at this time was Joseph Priestley, and their character in their heyday is reflected in the title of one of his chief publications: *An Essay on a Course of Liberal Education for Civil and Active Life*. The academies became prosperous institutions, catering not only for intending ministers and the professions, but providing also a sound business training. Thus they flourished exceedingly, as also did many of the Nonconformist divines of that period. 'The situation of these men,' says Macaulay of the dissenting clergy of that day, 'was such as the great majority of the divines of the Established Church might well envy. Few indeed of the parochial clergy were so abundantly supplied with comforts as the favourite orator of a great assembly of Nonconformists in the city. The voluntary contributions of his wealthy hearers, Aldermen and Deputies, West India merchants and Turkey merchants, Wardens of the Company of Fishmongers and Wardens of the Company of Goldsmiths, enabled him to become a landowner or a mortgagee. The best broadcloth from Blackwell Hall and the best poultry from Leadenhall Market were frequently left at his door. His influence over his flock was immense. Scarcely any member of a congregation of separatists entered into a partnership, married a daughter, put a son out as apprentice, or gave a vote at an election, without consulting his spiritual guide. On all political and literary questions the minister was the oracle of his own circle.'¹ The principals of the academies and the institutions themselves shared to the full in this access of favour and fortune, but their end was approaching. Their eclipse is not easy to explain, but it was probably due to a number of causes, including (a) their success encouraged the establishment of middle-class private schools, (b) the growth of Free Thought in circles in which they had formerly held sway, (c) the tendency to demand a more exclusive and specialised training for the Ministry led to the conversion of some into colleges for this purpose, e.g. Hackney. But although the academies lost their popularity, their educational and social traditions did not die, and there will be found on most Education Committees to-day representatives whose outlook would be better understood by Joseph Priestley than it is by most of their fellow-members.

A powerful reinforcement of dissent arrived in the latter eighteenth century—the Wesleyan Methodist Church. 'You

¹ Macaulay: *History of England* (Dent, E.L.), vol. II, p. 288.

cannot,' says Birrell, 'cut Wesley out of our national life. No single figure influenced so many minds, no single voice touched so many hearts. No other man did such a life's work for England.' Son of conforming Samuel Wesley, he headed a great breakaway from the Anglican fold, and while Methodist sympathies have not run parallel with those of the Independents on the education question, the two streams of thought often blend. Thus Methodist educational policy, as expounded by the famous uniting conference of 1932, ranges itself against State-aided denominationalism, pronouncing in favour of a system providing 'a Christian unsectarian school within reasonable distance of every family.' John Wesley was interested both in the theory and the practice of education; he was versed in the writings of Locke, Milton and Comenius, and attracted by the latter's practical or realist view of education. Wesley visited Jena and Herrnhut to see the Moravian schools there, and he himself founded schools in England to which, even during his most strenuous years, he devoted personal attention. Of his own Kingswood School he said: 'I have spent more money, time and care on this than on almost any design I ever had. . . . But it is worth all the labour.' His discerning eye was quick to realise the importance of the teacher, and it is notable that the Wesleyan movement has exercised an educational influence altogether out of proportion to the number of its schools because of the good quality of the men and women teachers trained at its colleges, Westminster (founded 1851) and Southlands (founded 1872) respectively. We owe also, as a direct result of Wesley's interest in poor children and his belief in residential schooling, the important work done by Methodists in the development of institutions for the care and protection of destitute children; 'the National Children's Home and Orphanage, which now cares for nearly 4,000 children with its great establishments in many of the most beautiful parts of Britain, its homes for cripples and convalescents, and its emigration centres abroad, is indeed a national asset, rescuing children from slum-life and training them to become worthy citizens of a great State.'¹ Such educational philanthropy is typical of Wesley's evangel, and is a living reminder of his zeal for the moral and social betterment of the poor. In a number of towns and villages Sunday and day schools were established, and in 1838 the Wesleyan Education Com-

¹ Body: *John Wesley and Education* (Epworth Press, 1936), pp. 152-3.

mittee was created to supervise the Connexion's educational affairs. The contribution of Methodism to secondary education has been mainly concerned with the development of boarding schools, both for boys and girls, in which the Kingswood tradition has been preserved and adjusted to modern tendencies. The Leys at Cambridge, opened by the Wesleyan Conference of 1875 under an old Kingswood boy as head master, was a successful attempt to provide Methodism with a Public School in harmony with its own religious background.

While the Wesleyan tradition in education has had a strong humanitarian flavour, there has been little evidence of softness or sentimentalism; the bias has been rather in the direction of sternness, and Wesley himself shared Locke's contempt for 'cockering.' His conception of school is largely disciplinary and reflects the austere moralist. 'Break their wills betimes,' he advises teachers in an oft-quoted passage; 'begin this work before they can run alone, before they can speak plain, before they can speak at all. Whatever pain it costs, break the will if you would not damn the child. Let a child from a year old be taught to fear the rod and cry softly; and from that age make him do as you bid, if you whip him ten times running to effect it. If you spare the rod, you spoil the child. If you do not conquer, you ruin him.' When he established his school at Kingswood he deliberately omitted play from the curriculum because he did not believe in it, and in reading he objected to any book which brought the thrill of romance or the gaiety of humour. This dour outlook has not survived in our educational tradition; indeed, it may be that we have run to the opposite extreme. But certainly we have to look, not to his concept of discipline, but in another direction to discover Wesley's permanent influence in English education. It will be found principally in his movement's success in training teachers and equipping leaders for public life. His was essentially a social gospel. 'Remember,' John Wesley, always a solitary figure, was told in his formative years, 'you cannot serve Him alone. You must therefore find companions or make them. The Bible knows nothing of solitary religion.' He never forgot this, and a great administrator, he made human contact a feature of his organisation. So class-meetings, small discussion groups under chosen leaders, became the rule in every Wesleyan church. Leadership in such circumstances proved an admirable training for public life, and as a result, in the nine-

teenth century Methodism wielded an influence in Parliament and in the councils and committees of Local Authorities that in proportion to its numbers was remarkably effective.

The Unitarian and Quaker causes each occupy a distinctive place in the dissenting tradition. The Unitarians were closely associated with the academies of the eighteenth century, and Joseph Priestley himself was of that persuasion. As a rule they were wealthy industrialists, who espoused humanitarianism, favoured freedom of thought, and rejoiced in the onward march of science. The Quakers had a much longer history and a tradition essentially their own, although they had close political affinities with the Independents, with whom they had shared in Commonwealth days the protection of Cromwell and in Restoration times the full severity of the Clarendon Code. During the years of persecution their numbers substantially increased, and they became an influential element in all movements which had as their object the betterment of mankind. The decisive part which they played in the abolition of slavery and in prison reform is well known, but their work in the sphere of higher education is scarcely less important. Their schools, though few in number, have through successive generations maintained a sound standard of education and upheld the lofty idealism of the Quaker faith. W. E. Forster, the Cabinet Minister in charge of the Education Act, 1870, was steeped in the Quaker tradition; his forebears had founded in 1710 and maintained a well-known school at Tottenham, while his father was a much-beloved Quaker preacher who with his wife, a Fowell Buxton, devoted himself to the anti-slavery agitation, dying in the Southern States when visiting the plantations on behalf of the slaves. W.E. was educated at Quaker Schools, Fishponds and Tottenham, and was a zealous member until expelled by the Society for breaking its rule concerning 'mixed marriages.' His crime was that he had married Arnold of Rugby's daughter; and incidentally by so doing he rehearsed domestically the great public task which fell to him in 1870 of uniting the divergent traditions of the Established Church and Dissent.

THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL TRADITION

The Grammar School has always preferred privilege to popularity, and has therefore never been a general favourite. The Balfour Act of 1902 gave it every encouragement to shed its

traditional aloofness, but it was hesitant in its response to the overtures of the Local Authorities empowered to assist secondary education under that statute. It accepted their grants, but with a gratitude qualified by a lively sense of interference to come; and in all its transactions at that fateful time, it showed an unwillingness to abandon the uncertain dignity of genteel poverty for a competence which involved a modest process of democratisation. Indeed, some of the stalwarts of the old Grammar School faith still regard an adverse bank balance as less distressing a liability than a sprinkling of free pupils. The head masters of many Grammar Schools carry this aloofness into their professional relations, and keeping themselves almost to themselves, they associate only in an organisation which they share with the heads of certain Public Schools. That an isolationist policy is not without its advantages is proved by the fact that the Grammar Schools, having pursued it in one way or another for centuries, have survived and show no sign of mortality. But as a habit, aloofness does not often inspire the affection of your neighbours, and it sometimes tempts them to be uncharitable. In any estimate of the Grammar School tradition, therefore, it is necessary to be circumspect, and especially to guard against mere prejudice disguised as criticism. It must be remembered also that the disparagement of venerable institutions is a national pastime, and there are few so ancient as the Grammar School. We should go sadly astray if we did not attach considerable weight to its influence, and in three aspects, at least, its history repays attention, namely: (*a*) its religious ancestry, (*b*) its classical curriculum, (*c*) its attitude to discipline. The mode of government to which Grammar Schools were subject has also a surviving significance, and it may be as suggested in a later chapter that there is something to be said for assigning to every recognised school a distinctive constitutional ordinance.

‘Not a man in Europe who talks bravely against the Church,’ Cardinal Newman once said, ‘but owes it to the Church that he can talk at all.’ The Grammar Schools have with the ancient Universities survived into this modern age to remind us of the Church’s enterprise in the cause of education in other days. The schools were cradled in an ecclesiastical environment, staffed by clerics, and created to ensure that boys of ability were taught the Christian religion and grounded in the elements of Latin

grammar. At first especially they were often housed in or near a church or monastery, though this became unfashionable later, and hence Shakespeare's gibe 'like a pedant that keeps a school i' the church.' Even, however, when transferred to new premises or founded by a Guild or a lay benefactor, they continued under ecclesiastical influence. 'A school might pass out of the immediate direction of the Church, but the Church maintained authorisation of the new school, and the control over the entrance into the profession of teaching and the right to call a teacher to account.'¹ Thus even private Grammar Schools were not outside the scope of ecclesiastical influence, and it was not until Queen Victoria's reign that teaching without a Bishop's licence was legalised.² Religious observance was an important feature of Grammar School life, and in school statutes there were often strict injunctions imposing Church duties on the head master and requiring the pupils to participate in regular acts of worship. The Primer of sequences and hymns was an essential pre-Reformation school service book, and copies of it were reproduced in the earliest days of printing. It is this book to which Chaucer's Prioress refers:

'This litel child his litel book lerninge
As he sat in the scole at his prymer.'

The Reformation led to a standardisation of the Primer, and one of King Edward VI's injunctions requires the use of the King's Primer and no other. About the same time Bible teaching assumed prominence, and it was customary in statutes to order that a passage from the Bible should be read overtly each morning, and often the boys followed the reading in their Latin Text, the more advanced students sometimes using their Septuagint or Greek Testament. The actual study of the Bible was done through a text-book, of which Paget's *History of the Bible*, a manual of question and answer, first published in 1613, became famous. But the vital part of the teaching was doctrinal, and the method employed was the catechism, a traditional form of teaching used from St. Augustine's day onwards and applied also to secular studies. The first Book of Common Prayer (1549) contains a catechism, as does the Prayer Book now authorised;

¹ Foster Watson: *The English Grammar Schools to 1660* (C.U.P.), p. 17.

² Midwives also were subject to episcopal licence until about 1820 (Hansard, 1903, vol. 109, column 1237).

but the Prayer Book catchism was regarded merely as a preparation for the study of more elaborate doctrinal text-books framed on similar lines. Nowell's *Catechism* (1570) was perhaps the best-known, and is sometimes prescribed in school statutes, but the bibliography of catechisms is extensive and illustrates the importance attached to doctrinal teaching in catechetical form. Without some appreciation of the major part which religion then played in the life and curriculum of the Grammar School, it is difficult to understand some of the subsequent phases of English educational history. 'The whole school round of religious observances, catechisms, primers and Bible-reading,' says Professor Foster Watson, 'shows the permeation of the school work with religious instruction. The ecclesiastical organisation of the school in the Middle Ages had prepared the ground for a theological discipline in the seventeenth century. The old objective influences of a picturesque ceremonial religion gave way to a subjective biblical atmosphere, and the school was continuously cast in a religious mould. The line of continuity cannot be better marked than by saying that the Psalms were as deeply fixed in the imagination of the school boys in the one age as in the other.'¹ Built as it thus was on a religious basis, it is not surprising that what Bishop Butler called 'the general decay of religion' in the eighteenth century profoundly affected the Grammar Schools, and their decline, which continued far into the nineteenth century, is no doubt largely attributable to this cause. For religion was not a separate compartment of the curriculum, but *in omnibus totus*.

As to secular studies, one is apt to think that the Grammar School course could not possibly have been as restricted as it is reputed to have been; but an examination of the time-tables shows that right up to the nineteenth century it is perfectly true to say that the basis was Latin, and that if you add a little Greek, nothing else was taught except divinity, including occasionally some Hebrew. The emphasis was on the structure and use of the language and little importance was attached to literature or ancient history. Lily's *Latin Grammar* was the most famous of all school books, and it was not until the third- or even fourth-form stage that the boys attempted a Latin author. There they made the acquaintance of Æsop, proceeding in the fourth and fifth forms to Ovid, Terence or Sallust; Vergil, Horace and

¹ Foster Watson: *The English Grammar Schools to 1660*, p. 60.

Cicero belonged to the final school period; but up to their last day the pupils devoted much of their time to learning grammar rules by rote and turning English sentences into Latin. Latin verse composition was done a good deal in the final stage, but of the authors mentioned the books actually studied were few and the method followed was that of construing in class. It may seem to us a strange kind of schooling, but forty or fifty years ago there were in existence Grammar Schools in which the curriculum was not substantially different: French, a little mathematics, and some chemistry (without laboratory) had been added, but the masters who taught them were often looked on as inferior beings. 'The smaller Grammar Schools,' says Sir Cyril Norwood, 'were not thriving at any time in the nineteenth century, though they continued to exist and in some cases to improve. But they lacked resources, and, what was worse, they lacked hope. Head masters lived insecurely, and their assistants were miserably paid. It is approximately true to say that there was little chance offered to an able boy of going far, if in the nineteenth century he lived in a small town or country district.'¹

Reformers like Ascham (1570) and Brinsley (1612) tried to encourage the teaching of English, if only by the employment of the method of double translation, but the native tongue was never looked on with favour. For arithmetic boys were often sent to a Cyphering School or to a private coach, as for writing they frequently went to a scrivener's, though the writing of Latin epistles was a customary upper-form exercise. English they learned at home or at the Petty School before admission to the Grammar School, but it was not usual to speak it during school hours. 'That is a usuall custome in schools,' says Brinsley, 'to appoint Custodes or Asini (as they are termed in some places) to observe and catch them who speake English in each fourme, or whom they see idle, to give them the ferula.' The intellectual ideal of the Grammar School is indicated by the same writer, who was himself head master at Ashby de la Zouch, when he says that a scholar proceeding to the University should at the matriculation stage be 'a good Grammarian at least, able to understand, write and speake Latine in good sort.' Not less remarkable than the curriculum itself is the undoubted fact that the English people believed in it through many centuries; 'All

¹ Norwood: *The English Tradition of Education*, p. 151. See also Coulton, *Fourscore Years*, pp. 48, 68 and 253.

men,' said Roger Ascham, 'covet to have' their children speak Latin.'

Grammar Schools were fairly numerous. For example, in Essex at the time of the Reformation there were sixteen, and possibly nineteen; while in 1906, when Sir Michael Sadler surveyed the county, he found twenty-six Public Secondary Schools, of which fourteen were old foundations. 'We must therefore suppose,' says Professor Foster Watson, 'that the curriculum was sufficiently in unison with the social, religious and national life to attract the children of the middle classes, higher and lower, in the towns, and that boys from the country districts were attracted into town Grammar Schools. The ground of the attraction was not in the classical education as such, but in the religious element in the school constitution, which received its emphasis and support from instruction in "the holy languages"—Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, which had so close a connection either directly or indirectly with the Sacred Scriptures.'¹ It seems to us a queer curriculum, suggestive of great waste of time and gross mispending of youth, especially as in our enthusiasm for things scientific and practical we have converted 'academic' almost into a term of abuse. But what would Roger Ascham or Charles Hoole say about our modern time-table? It would seem strangely heterogeneous to them, and they might perhaps wonder whether it ensures a disciplined mind, an adequate sense of accurate statement, or an appreciation of spiritual values. We would probably retort that such implied criticism was quite unmerited, and they in turn might say that we are much too hasty in our condemnation of an educational training which produced a sound and sturdy breed of men.

The discipline of the Grammar School seems to us unjustifiably harsh; there was a perpetual warfare between teacher and pupil. This antagonism eventually undermined the prestige of the Grammar School, and hastened its decline in the eighteenth century. 'The severe and proper discipline of a Grammar School,' said Joseph Priestley, 'is become a common topic of ridicule; and few young gentlemen, except those who are designed for some of the learned professions, are made to submit to the rigours of it.' Pains and penalties were inflicted daily, but it seems also to have been a common practice to set aside one day a week as a *dies irae*. 'On Fridays,' say the Westminster School

¹ Foster Watson: *The English Grammar School to 1660*, pp. 531-2.

statutes of 1560, '... those who have committed any grave crime are accused; for it is right that they should pay the penalties of evil-doers.'¹ The pedagogic literature of the Grammar School is full of references to corporal punishment, some writers urging severity, others advocating a modification in the harshness of the normal regime. One gleans an impression that a great many masters were 'cruel and irous' and that birch and rod were constant topics of common-room discussion. Some teachers were no doubt kindly, but at the other extreme was the gentleman 'who in winter would ordinarily in a cold morning, whip the Boyes over for no other purpose than to get himself a heat.' The technique of punishment was as seriously discussed as Lily's Grammar or Nowell's Catechism. 'When you are to correct any stubborne or unbroken boy,' writes Brinsley, one of the more enlightened of seventeenth-century head masters, 'you make sure with him to hold him fast; as they are inforced to do, who are to shoo or tame an unbroken colt. To this end to appoint 3 or 4 of your Schollers whom you know to be honest and strong enough, or more if neede be, to laye hands upon him together, to holde him faste over some fourme, so that he cannot stirre hand nor foot.'

It is not surprising to learn that fond mothers sometimes bribed teachers to spare their children. 'He is,' runs Thomas Fuller's description of the honourable schoolmaster, 'and will be known to be an absolute Monarch in his school. If cockering Mothers proffer him money to purchase their sonnes an exemption from his rod . . . with disdain he refuseth it, and scorns the late custom in some places of commuting whipping into money.' The cockering or spoiling mother was, however, probably an exception, and there can be little doubt that parents generally shared the pedagogic faith in the efficacy of the birch. Girls usually received their education at home, and there is reason to believe that they experienced the full rigour of parental chastisement. Lady Jane Grey complains that her parents expected of her a standard of conduct so perfect that only God could live up to it, and that they punished her 'with pinches, nippes and bobbes'; while Agnes Paston made a habit of beating her daughter once or twice a week, and asked the schoolmaster 'to truly belash' her son if he did not do his work well.

The antagonism between teacher and pupil is sometimes attri-

¹ Leach: *Education Charters* (C.U.P.), p. 515.

buted to the souring influence of bad teaching conditions and poor pay. But it is more likely true that it was due to the common belief that if you spared the rod you spoiled the child. Thus corporal punishment was elevated into a position of importance in the ritual of character-training, and was generally accepted as a laudable practice. It was advocated quite as strongly by John Locke, the great philosopher of reason, who was not a schoolmaster, as by any professional pedagogic writer. Children, he contends, should not be 'cockered,' their bodies should be hardened, they should take cold baths and their clothes should not be too warm. Whipping should not be resorted to for a first offence, but subsequently it should be administered 'till the impressions of the mind were found legible in the face, voice and submission of the child.' From its inception right down to Victorian days, the Grammar School maintained this tradition of organised cruelty, and its pupils entered its gates with fear. Our literature is full of references to the unhappiness of school life, many of which are familiar, as, for example, Blake's:

'But to go to school in a summer morn
O! it drives all joy away;
Under a cruel eye outworn
The little ones spend the day
In sighing and dismay.'

Or to quote a late Victorian example, there is Kipling's song of his school, where

'. . . we met with famous men
Set in office o'er us;
And they beat on us with rods—
Faithfully with many rods—
Daily beat on us with rods,
For the love they bore us.'

Shakespeare, who probably acquired his little Latin and less Greek at the Grammar School built by the Holy Cross Guild at Stratford-on-Avon, reflects as well as anyone the traditional outlook of the Grammar School, and his evidence is not the less useful because his references are casual or incidental.¹ Some hold the view that Shakespeare was himself an usher for a short period, but says Professor Dover Wilson, 'Whether ex-usher or

¹ See Mr. Dover Wilson's clever reconstruction of 'The Schoolmaster in Shakespeare's Plays,' in 'Essays by Divers Hands,' *Transactions R.S.L.*, vol. ix.

not, Shakespeare found something in those who lived by the instruction of youth which he disliked, and worse still, something which he could not bring himself to forgive.' He remembers, or Jaques does for him, the whining boy—

'creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school.'

He recalls also the joy with which boys on quitting the school premises,

'Each hurries toward his home and sporting place.'

He reminds us of 'the threatening twigs of birch'; and he makes Antony order the flogging of the messenger with the words:

'Whip him, fellows,
Till, like a boy, you see him cringe his face,
And whine aloud for mercy.'

Of his schoolmasters, Dr. Pinch is 'a hungry, lean-faced villain'; Sir Hugh Evans, if more genial, portrays education as a business of Latin declensions and relative pronouns; while Holofernes' presence on the stage appears to be solely for the purpose of burlesquing the verbal pedantries of a Grammar School education, which Costard, the clown, not inaptly describes as 'an alms-basket of words.'

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SPIRIT

Eton is said to have been the first Grammar School to have been called a Public School, 'the meaning of which was simply that scholars might come from any part of England, and not only, as was usually the case, from the immediate neighbourhood of the school.'¹ Winchester had been founded sixty years before Eton, and both in their charters were asked to make provision for free place pupils, '*pauperes et indigentes*,' a stipulation probably inserted to secure for these schools as charitable foundations the protection which Canon Law gave to eleemosynary endowments. Poverty is a relative term, and it does not appear to have prevented these great schools from establishing an exclusive tradition early in their history. Perhaps exclusiveness is the chief differentiating mark of a Public School; for there does not seem to be any other criterion adequately distinguishing it from the

¹ Salzman: *English Life in the Middle Ages* (O.U.P.), p. 143.

Grammar School, from which several Public Schools originated. Most of them are residential, but some are and always have been day schools, but day schools which, owing to their social eminence, have been able to pick and choose their pupils, and certainly in these days of easy travel able also to serve a wide area. People who write about Public Schools generally avoid this difficult question of definition, but Professor Archer attempts it, saying: 'At the close of the eighteenth century the distinction between the "Public Schools" and the rest of the Grammar Schools is well established. The Public Schools were merely those of the Grammar Schools which had increased in numbers and prestige while the rest declined. Two changes had occurred which served to differentiate them; they had increased the numbers of their staff and they had become boarding schools.'¹ This is a good shot at a definition, but it rules out three day schools which definitely belong to the Public School tradition. It is doubtful indeed whether any description will serve which does not draw attention to the social and economic aspect; for the Public Schools are obviously institutions which an acquisitive society has provided for its well-to-do and its upper-middle class. This naturally makes them unpopular with those who deplore class distinctions, although it must be admitted that some of the most professed democrats send their sons to them, while all the political parties who have held office have recruited Ministers of Education from their alumni.

The schools are fond of boasting about their antiquity:

*'Olim fuit monachorum
Schola nostra sedes';*

and of glorying in their venerable customs, '*mores traditos.*' But it is doubtful whether it is their past which constitutes their fairest claim to renown, for their tradition through the ages does not differ materially from that of the endowed Grammar Schools, and like them, when the nineteenth century dawned, they were in a sorry plight. It was somewhere about that time that people began to realise that the Public Schools were in urgent need of reform. Sydney Smith slated them in the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Quarterly* made a violent attack on Eton; eventually, after a long onslaught of pamphleteering which continued in spite of

¹ Archer: *Secondary Education in the XIXth Century*, p. 13. See also chapter i of the Fleming Report (H.M.S.O., 1944) for an excellent historical sketch.

the reforming zeal of some great head masters, they were made the subject of a Royal Commission which reported in 1864. Nine schools only were designated Public Schools for the purpose of this enquiry: Eton, Winchester, Westminster, Shrewsbury, Harrow, Charterhouse, Rugby, St. Paul's and Merchant Taylors, the two last of which were subsequently omitted from the provisions of the Public Schools Act of 1868. The criticism of the Public Schools at the beginning of the century had concentrated mainly upon five aspects: (1) low moral tone, (2) bullying, (3) bad food and accommodation, (4) narrow curriculum, and (5) poor intellectual standard. When the Royal Commission was constituted, some of the worst abuses had been remedied, and the schools were in process of change. But its report was a condemnatory document, and sternly critical of the education provided. 'In one word,' said *The Times* severely, 'we may say that they find it to be a failure.'

The Royal Commission was appointed—as Royal Commissions are apt to be—a little late in the day, for already several of the Public Schools were putting their house in order and many of their schoolmasters had sensed the gravity of the crisis into which the schools had drifted. 'Either the Public Schools must be reformed from within or the whole system must be swept away, as it was swept away in Prussia by Humboldt and Stein. The evils were too deep-rooted to be eradicated merely by administrative action from without. Nothing but the life-work of men who combined great force of will and moral earnestness with consummate tact and the gift of influencing boys could suffice for the task.'¹ Happily such men were available, and their achievement in remoulding the Public School tradition constitutes one of the great chapters of our educational history. Not only were the older schools reformed, but in the new atmosphere of revival thus created new foundations came into being. 'If the beginning of the nineteenth century was a lean time for Public Schools, the middle of it was one of unexampled expansion. To that time belongs the founding of a number of schools that are now and have been for a long time famous and prosperous. In the 'forties came Marlborough, Cheltenham, Radley, Lancing and Rossall. In the 'fifties Wellington and Bradfield; in the 'sixties Clifton and Malvern.'² This revival, led as it was by men who were

¹ Archer: *Secondary Education in the XIXth Century*, p. 24.

² Bernard Darwin: *The English Public School* (Longmans), p. 8.

prophets in their generation, had a considerable influence on the general attitude to education, and in this way these exclusive schools—thus do the fates delight in irony—heralded the dawn of a national system of education. The pity is that the Public Schools ever since have stood aloof from national deliberations about education; for their personnel could enrich the common stock of ideas about teaching and administration, and the country is the poorer, as no doubt they are, because of their preference for isolation.

Bagehot has a famous chapter in his *Physics and Politics* in which he asks, 'What is progress?' answering it finally by declaring that it is a product of the magic of leadership. There is magic in the story of the rescue of the English Public School from the slough of despond, and it is largely a tale of heroic leadership. Who were the heroes? Their name is legion, both heads and assistants. Perhaps the first in point of time was James, the Etonian, who at the end of the eighteenth century raised the numbers at Rugby from 52 to 245, and laid the foundations upon which Arnold subsequently built so effectively. Butler of Shrewsbury was one of the greatest; he came to a moribund school and completely revitalised it. But the men who captured the popular imagination, much as Sanderson of Oundle did at a later period, were Arnold and Thring, and to a somewhat less degree the unconventional Almond of Loretto.

Education is as a rule a silent service, and as such it usually prefers the man who quietly and efficiently gets on with the business of his own school. But celebrity has its uses, and there can be no doubt that both Arnold and Thring had a great public value at that crucial period when educational legislation was receiving active consideration. Lytton Strachey has set a fashion of disparaging Arnold's work, and probably in time Thring also will fall into the hands of the detractor; but we misread the story of education in England if we are not conscious of our debt to the forthrightness of their character and the solidity of their achievement. His contemporary admirers perhaps claimed too much for Arnold, and it may be that their eulogies call for some discount. It must be confessed, however, that Dr. Martineau writing in 1852 saw most of the chinks in his armour; for he describes him as 'respectable in scholarship, insensible to art, undistinguished in philosophy, great in action, though his sphere was not large.' He was not quite so original in his ideas as his

friends thought he was; his prefect system was at least as old in conception as William of Wykeham, and his modest broadening of the curriculum had been anticipated by the Dissenting Academies, who had gone much further in that direction. His greatness surely lay in the grandeur of his personality, and in his conception of the head master as spiritual pastor of his boys. It was not the prefects, or the French, or the Mathematics that constituted Arnold's achievement at Rugby, but the use which he made of these and other instruments of education through the exercise of his exceptional will-power and driving force. It was in every sense a triumph of personality.

‘The greatest gift the hero leaves his race
Is to have been a hero.’

Thring, on the other hand, was certainly an innovator; he showed the same radical pioneering zeal at Uppingham which was afterwards displayed by men like Sanderson at Oundle, Howson at Holt and Paton at Manchester. He made people appreciate the significance of environment by insisting unceasingly that the school structure and elevation must be ennobling. He proclaimed the value of music both as a means of individual enrichment and also as a communal influence. He initiated the idea of head masters meeting regularly in conference, ‘as we want more communion and intercourse.’ He inaugurated school missions, both for their intrinsic value and as a method of fostering a spirit of social service. He gave hobbies a new prestige, stressed the importance of the training of teachers, tried to break down the formidable barriers between the head, the staff and the boys, and brought new hope to the non-academic pupil by his doctrine that ‘every boy can do something well.’ He was never daunted by difficulties, and seemed to enjoy battling with them. Diphtheria threatened the school; so while the drains were being overhauled, he transferred it to Wales for a year and was thus probably the first person to carry out a successful school evacuation. Overcoming the apathy and opposition of his Governors, he converted a dying Grammar School into a great boarding-school, and by his energy and wide influence he compelled many persons in high place to acknowledge the urgency of educational reform.

It is generally agreed that the chief contribution which Arnold, Thring and their like-minded contemporaries made to

the school world was to restore to it the lost ideal of the Christian gentleman; once again, the emphasis as in the best days of chivalry was upon 'trouthe and honour, fredom and curtesie.' 'A most singular and striking change has come upon our Public Schools,' wrote Dr. Moberley, head master of Winchester at the time of Arnold's death, 'a change too great for any person to appreciate adequately, who has not known them in both these times. This change is undoubtedly part of a general improvement in our generation in respect of piety and reverence, but I am sure that to Dr. Arnold's personal earnest simplicity of purpose, strength of character, power of influence and piety, which none who ever came near him could mistake or question, the carrying of this improvement into our schools is mainly attributable.' Thring's influence was in the same direction. 'Most of all, and first,' he said, indicating the aims of Uppingham, 'the winning of a character for truth and true honour. Most of all, that no lie in word or deed, no shams, no underhand deceits shall harbour here—nothing that will not bear the light. Let this be the school character.'¹ It is remarkable how frequently in the writings and sayings of the great Public School teachers of this period, you find this same stress upon truth and honour. Edward Bowen, the famous Harrow house-master, with his vivacious Celtic temperament, had none of the solemn earnestness of these two great head masters, but his teaching has the same emphasis. 'The personal influence he exerted on the boys who lived in his House was,' says Lord Bryce, 'quite as remarkable as his "form-teaching." Stoicism and honour were the qualities it was mainly directed to form. Every boy was expected to show manliness and endurance, and to utter no complaint. . . . His maxims were: "Take sweet and bitter as sweet and bitter come," and "Always play the game." He never preached to the boys or lectured to them, and if he had to convey a reproof, conveyed it in a single sentence. But he dwelt upon honour as the foundation of character, and made every boy feel that he was expected to reach the highest standard of truthfulness, courage and duty to the little community of the House, or the cricket eleven, or his football team.'²

The precise influence which the Public Schools exercised in

¹ See Parkin: *Life and Letters of Edward Thring* (Macmillan), p. 123.

² Bryce: *Studies in Contemporary Biography* (The Macmillan Company), 1903, p. 350.

the controversies about national education is difficult to determine. Arnold certainly urged strongly that everyone should have the opportunity of learning to read and write, and he was a strong advocate of a better provision of education for what he called 'the middling classes.' 'For this,' he said, 'the interference of the Government seems to me indispensable, in order to create a national and systematic course of proceeding, instead of the mere feeble efforts of individuals.' To Thring, on the other hand, State intervention was anathema. 'I am utterly against free education by law,' he said; and the most that he would concede in this way was 'that the very poor should have just the elementary teaching of reading and writing provided for them gratis in a humble way, so as not to compete with any paying school.' The indirect influence of the Public Schools on public sentiment about education was considerable, because Parliament then more than now was composed largely of men who belonged to their orbit and took their cue from them. Quite apart, therefore, from the opinion of the public schoolmasters as to whether the State should intervene or not, it mattered a good deal that there was this educational revival fermenting within the Public Schools. It created a new interest in character training, methods of teaching and the needs of the average boy. The social prestige of the Public Schools made their educational endeavours appropriate topics of conversation in places where public policy was discussed, and it was undoubtedly helpful that they were becoming virile and pioneering institutions at a time when the governing classes were making up their minds to do something about 'the education question.'

As to the contribution of the Public Schools to our educational outlook, most people would agree that we owe a good deal to them for the emphasis that they have laid upon character training. True it has at times been associated with an excessive athleticism and an almost maudlin sentimentalism about playing the game. Sir Henry Newbolt's 'Vital Lampada' is probably the best-known school poem of the last generation, and has been described by Alice Meynell as 'the poem of perfect discipline, in play and war — of voluntary obedience, which is the noble perfection of liberty.' But the sentiment seems a little false:

'His Captain's hand on his shoulder smote
Play up, play up, and play the game.'

With ten runs to get on a bumpy pitch, what game could he play, as Mr. Bernard Darwin observes, 'but keep his wicket up and let the runs come if they would'? But the fascination which this poem has had for schools of all sorts and sizes does show what a grip the Public School ideal of 'playing the game' has on our imagination. It is the essence of the tradition which we have absorbed from the Arnold and Thring philosophy; and this stress on playing fair, being a good loser, showing pluck and so on is a valuable part of our educational creed. 'Many a lad,' said a public schoolmaster of long experience, 'who leaves an English Public School disgracefully ignorant of the rudiments of useful knowledge, who can speak no language but his own, and writes that imperfectly, to whom the noble literature of his country and the stirring history of his forefathers are almost a sealed book, and who has devoted a great part of his time and nearly all his thoughts to athletic sports, yet brings away with him something beyond all price, a manly, straightforward character, a scorn of lying and meanness, habits of obedience and command, and fearless courage.'¹ It would, however, be misleading not to recall that in the Public Schools there is to be found for those who like to profit by it intellectual teaching of the highest quality. 'But,' Sir Cyril Norwood says, contrasting the intellectual with other features, 'on the side of culture they are less convincing and further from their ideal.'² The same point was made by Archbishop Temple, also a former head master, when he says of Public Schools: 'The first great mark of this type of education is that in practice—whatever its theory may have been—in practice it is corporate. It has believed in educating people rather through influence than through instruction. . . . Of course, it does not ignore instruction, but it is true that not very long ago I heard a very distinguished lady asked whether a certain school was what we call a Public School; "Oh yes," she replied, "it is a real Public School. I mean, they don't learn anything there."³

It would seem fair, therefore, while not forgetting achievement in Open Scholarship and other examinations, to conclude that in the Public School the development of the mind is not a primary consideration; its chief concern is the moulding of an upright character, and the playing-field is one of several aspects of the

¹ Rev. T. L. Papillon: quoted by Darwin, *The English Public School*, p. 21.

² Norwood: *The English Tradition of Education*, p. 139.

³ Temple: *Church and Nation* (Macmillan), pp. 184-5.

corporate life in which the pupil is trained to be a good citizen. The Public Schools have not stood still since the great pioneering days of the nineteenth century, but it is essentially true that the impression which Arnold and his contemporaries left upon them is still their distinguishing feature. 'If we seek,' says Professor Findlay, 'to bring into relief the main principles which give Arnold an enduring fame as a teacher, they will be found, not in his views as to the use of the Classics or as to the need of a more extended scheme of studies, but in his exposition of government and guidance in the corporate society of school.'¹

The Public Schools continue to fill most of the important positions in the political, administrative and judicial spheres of our national life, but it is questionable whether they have been successful in furnishing that aristocracy of talent which was Disraeli's ideal. Some of their most severe critics come from within their gates; and the main burden of the charge against them seems to be, not only that their education provides an inadequate training for the direction of affairs in a great and complex society, but also that their conception of gentlemanliness has serious limitations. 'I have become myself,' says Mr. Desmond MacCarthy, reviewing Professor Laski's essay on *The Danger of being a Gentleman*, 'exceedingly suspicious of the value of Public Schools to-day as training places for future rulers or men who may occupy positions of authority. They seem to me to encourage class-consciousness without being able to breed that unaggressive easy self-confidence, that air of being at home in the world, which enabled the gentleman to get on with all sorts and conditions of men, though he might prefer as a rule his own sort, and enabled him to occupy subordinate positions without touchily protecting his own dignity or to give orders without wounding that of others.'²

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CONTRIBUTION

From Tudor days onwards the Roman Catholics were prevented by law from having a public educational policy until emancipation came in the shape of the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829. Thus their school-building programme began later than that of other denominations, and it was not until 1845, when

¹ Findlay: *Arnold of Rugby*, p. xiii.

² *Sunday Times*, January 28th, 1940. For a constructive criticism see *The Public Schools and the Future*, by Donald Hughes (C.U.P., 1942).

the Catholic Institute obtained returns, that there was any definite information as to the number and distribution of their schools. Statistics, then collected, revealed that there were 220 schools, but the returns showed that the premises were sometimes nothing more than 'a mere cottage,' 'a room over a stable,' and so on.¹

In 1847, however, the Catholic Poor School Committee was constituted, and after about four years' correspondence with the Whitehall authorities, arrangements were arrived at which enabled Roman Catholic schools to receive building grants. The main issue of this correspondence had been the terms of the Trust Deeds of Catholic Schools, and the compromise agreed upon left the administrative control in each case substantially in the hands of a Committee of Management composed of a priest (with casting vote) and six Roman Catholic laymen. With the aid of the building grants a progressive building programme was carried out which resulted in a total of 773 recognised Elementary Schools by 1870. In their last report prior to the consideration of the Forster Act, the Catholic Committee insisted that if education was to be compulsory, denominational schools must be part of any national system. Much attention was given in this early period to the question of teacher training. At first it was thought that the religious orders could supply all the principal teaching needs, but in 1854 the decision was reached that there must also be Training Colleges for lay teachers, both men and women, in separate institutions. Great difficulty was experienced for many years in securing an adequate supply of men teachers. 'The training system of the Roman Catholic Church,' says Bartley, 'had to contend with a serious difficulty. As a body, the class of persons belonging to the communion are of the poorest. With the exception of the few in the highest ranks, there is but a small proportion of the educated among them. No middle class of small tradesmen, superior artisans, and the like, exists in sufficient numbers to supply the wants of the male Training School.'²

Nearly a century has passed since the Catholic Institute was founded, and in that period the Roman Catholic community has provided itself with a great many secondary and Elementary Schools. The schools, which have often served also as mission churches in new parishes, are to be found as a rule in places

¹ Bartley: *Schools for the People* (1871), p. 79.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 471-2.

where there is a substantial Catholic population. Thus in some districts there are no Catholic schools, but in certain areas they are numerous; in Liverpool, for example, out of 131,000 children on the Elementary School roll, 60,000 are in non-provided schools, of whom about 41,000 are Roman Catholic. There is also much variety in the character and tradition of the schools, especially those of the Secondary School type; for many of them are associated with Religious Orders with a distinctive educational heritage. Downside and Stonyhurst, for example, differ considerably in the form and content of the education which they provide, although they both belong socially and administratively to the Public School category; similar differences are to be found in the grant-aided Secondary Schools, and it is a great mistake to think of Catholic schools as conforming to one pattern. Some of the finest work has been done by nuns, and many examples could be given of pioneer work done by them in localities in which the provision of Secondary School facilities for girls was at the beginning of the present century unequal to the demand. Thus in his survey of Higher Education in Essex, the late Sir Michael Sadler commended the work of the Roman Catholic Sisterhoods, especially that of the Ursulines at Forest Gate, Ilford and Brentwood, and the Dames de Nazareth at Colchester. 'The influence of these schools,' he observes, 'is great, and the visitor who is allowed to become acquainted with them cannot fail to feel the charm of their refinement.'¹ Many of these schools, both secondary and elementary, have, through the Order to which they belong, international contacts, and their educational tradition has its roots in another country. The injunctions laid down by the founder of the Order have a surviving influence; the Ursulines, to quote one example, are not unmindful, wherever their school may be situated, of the principles laid down by their Venerable Anne de Xaintonge and their training has features which recall their French origin.² Our educational literature is almost too extensive, but so far it lacks a sympathetic history of the development of Catholic education in England since the emancipation; when written, this will be a great story of uphill achievement.

From the emancipation period onwards the Roman Catholics

¹ *Report on Secondary and Higher Education in Essex* (1906), p. 23.

² Barnard: *French Tradition in Education* (C.U.P., 1922), chap. iii and Appendix E.

have been consistent in their demand for separate consideration. 'The question of our schools,' said Cardinal Hinsley in words that might have been uttered at any time during the last century, 'the duty of securing a Catholic education for all Catholic children, and of safeguarding the young after school age, remains the most pressing of our problems. On the successful solution of this question depends the whole future of Catholicism in this country; it is in a very true sense a question of life or death.' As a contrast to this point of view, that of Sir Cyril Norwood is interesting; describing the Roman Catholic standpoint in education as that of '*salus ecclesiae suprema lex*,' he observes that there are some within the Church of England who hold a similar opinion. 'It is clear,' he continues, comparing it with his own conception of the Christian duty to education, 'that there are two systems, a faith once for all delivered, and a faith progressive and widening, as the thoughts of men widen. They cannot exist together inside the same Church without disrupting it, as they are disrupting the Church of England to-day, and they cannot be taught inside the same school, or the same national system of education. One or other must go outside into schools of its own. I believe that England has long ago made its choice, and that the right system for English schools is that which I have described second in order.'¹

The most authoritative statement of Catholic views on education is that given in the closely reasoned Encyclical of 1929, *Divini illius Magistri*, in which Pope Pius XI gives his answer to the question, 'To whom does Education belong?' Education, it is there argued, is essentially a social activity, and it is concerned 'in due proportion' with three societies, two of which—the family and the civil—belong to the natural order, while the third—the Church—belongs to the supernatural order. Education belongs pre-eminently to the Church, and it is her inalienable right and duty to watch over the entire education of her children 'not merely in regard to religious instruction, but in regard to every other branch of learning and every regulation in so far as religion and morality are concerned.'² This does not, the Encyclical maintains, prevent the State from reserving to itself the direction of schools intended to prepare the young for certain civic duties and especially for military service; thus education is 'a matter

¹ Norwood; *The English Tradition of Education*, pp. 54, 55.

² *The Christian Education of Youth* (Catholic Truth Society), p. 10.

that belongs to the Church and the State . . . and between the two powers there must reign a well-ordered harmony.' The Encyclical stresses the importance of cherishing a Christian family life, and concludes by dealing with the position of Catholic schools 'in a nation where there are different religious beliefs.' 'In such a case,' it proceeds, 'it becomes the duty of the State, indeed it is the easier and more reasonable method of procedure, to leave the free scope to the initiative of the Church and the family, while giving them such assistance as justice demands. That this can be done to the full satisfaction of families, and to the advantage of education and of public peace and tranquillity, is clear from the actual experience of some countries, comprising different religious denominations. There the school-legislation respects the rights of the family, and Catholics are free to follow their own system of teaching in schools that are entirely Catholic. Nor is distributive justice lost sight of, as is evidenced by the financial aid granted by the State to the several schools demanded by the families.'

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS OF THE COMPROMISE, AND ITS CONSIDERATION BY PARLIAMENT

‘On the whole, I think Forster has hit on the only plan that will work in so curious a country as England.’ (*James Macdonell, the famous leader-writer, in a letter to a friend, June 12th, 1870.*)

THE NATURE OF THE COMPROMISE

The view that schools belonged to the Church suffered final eclipse in England in the eighteenth century; this was due partly to decisions in the law courts, partly to the indifference of the ecclesiastical leaders and partly also to changes in public opinion. There thus came an interregnum in the government of education at a time when leadership was essential, and during the greater part of the nineteenth century contention on the subject of control was continuous. The high-water mark of the controversy was reached in the parliamentary debates preceding the passing of the Education Act of 1870, that illogical statute which has formed the basis of so much subsequent legislation and administrative development. The educational system which it initiated is now inextricably woven into the pattern of our national life, and although anomalous and inconsistent, because planned to accommodate such various interests, it is none the less reasonably efficient and practical in its operation. Its basic feature is a co-partnership between the Central and Local Authorities, and its financial framework is a combination of national taxation and local rating, the burden now falling almost equally upon the exchequer and the locality respectively. The Education Act, 1944, as indicated in the last chapter, preserves this condominium, but recasts the administrative framework and replaces the Board of Education by a Ministry armed with new powers.

For over forty years the Board of Education has been responsible for the guiding administrative principles, and the Local Authority for their actual application. While it has thus been largely a State system, it has also left room for the exercise of local discretion and for a considerable measure of voluntary initiative and effort. Elementary Education has been free and

compulsory, but schools have been built both by the Local Authority, assisted by a percentage grant from the State—and the Churches, although all are maintained by the former. Over the schools built by the Churches, the particular denomination has exercised a measure of control, subject to compliance with certain statutory requirements. Higher Education has been neither free nor compulsory, but otherwise its organisation bears some resemblance to that for Elementary Education. Some Secondary and Technical Schools are provided and maintained by the State, while others, though aided by the Central and Local Governments, are, subject to certain conditions, autonomous. It has, however, been permissible for schools to be set up without approval quite independently of the State, and it is a characteristic anomaly that the two main types of school which fall into this category are called respectively Public and Private. A notable difference in the government of Elementary and Secondary Schools of the voluntary or non-provided kind has been that the Elementary 'belong' to Churches, while the Secondary Schools, although many have an ecclesiastical history, virtually 'belong' to Governors appointed under schemes approved by the Board of Education, which *inter alia* allow pupils to be absent from any religious teaching or observance if parents so desire.

In all schools not provided but maintained or assisted out of public funds, denominational teaching in conformity with a scheme or trust-deed could be given, but parents have been free to withdraw their children from such teaching and the timetable has been arranged to facilitate the exercise of this prerogative. Although Elementary Education has been compulsory, parents have been under no obligation to send their children to public Elementary Schools, if they ensured in some other way that they were receiving 'efficient elementary instruction.'

The essential ingredients of this heterogeneous system were, for the purposes of Elementary Education, all present in the Education Act of 1870—Central and Local Government, taxation and local rating, the principle of compulsory attendance, a dual arrangement of provided and non-provided schools, and a conscience clause. Our respect for the statesmen and administrators who framed this compromise is enhanced when we recall that the measure was carried in the teeth of virulent opposition and that among the principles involved were some which had a controversial history stretching far back into the political past.

Nor can we forget the vision which somehow ensured that the structure planned under such difficulties was yet so designed that it could be adapted and enlarged by subsequent generations. Compromise has been described as the forbearance of one of two parties in a dispute, but in the debate of 1870 there were a great many contending forces, for several of whom the sacrifice of deep-rooted and firmly held principles was involved. The nearest parallel to this parliamentary battle in our time is the Revised Prayer Book controversy of the nineteen-twenties, for in that contest also traditional religious principles were at stake to a degree that obliterated party barriers. But the Prayer Book issue was neither so real nor so comprehensive, for it did not touch the social well-being of the whole community; and further, it ended in the rejection of the measures proposed and a fairly general desire to let the quarrel pass into temporary oblivion. The Education Bill, on the other hand, was a Government measure, and its passage a triumph for Gladstone's first Cabinet, though it cost him the goodwill of many members of his own party. There was, moreover, an aftermath of bitterness which hampered the development of education for many years. Viewing the struggle with the detachment which a seventy years' interval provides, it is difficult to reach any conclusion other than that some such legislation was long overdue, and the assent of both Houses of Parliament, avowedly so difficult to obtain for any comprehensive educational plan, was the essential need beside which the precise form of the legislation, though important, was a secondary consideration. That the final statute, as reshaped during the ardours of debate, provided a solid foundation upon which a national system of education could be built greatly increases our indebtedness to the statesmanship of Gladstone and Forster.

Political thinkers have often argued the question as to when compromise involving sacrifice of solemn principles is justified. John Morley, for example, although a young member of the Liberal Party in 1870 and a hero-worshipper and ultimately the biographer of Gladstone, criticises the Forster Act as nothing better than a small reform, secured by a sacrifice of principle, which by its presence on the statute book prevented his party from subsequently accomplishing a bolder measure more in accordance with Liberal traditions.¹ Other political thinkers

¹ Morley: *Compromise* (Macmillan), p. 230.

take a different view, some assigning to the weapon of compromise a high place in the armoury of progress. Lecky, for example, contends that 'legitimate time-serving' is an important part of a statesman's outfit; and argues that whatever principles are at stake 'in the long run, under free governments, political questions and measures must be adjusted to the wishes of the various sections of the people, and this adjustment is a great work of statesmanship.'¹ The illustration which he selects to give point to his argument is the Education Act of 1870. 'Everyone who is interested in the subject,' he says, writing in 1899, 'has his own conviction about the kind of education which is in itself the best for the people, and also the best for the Government to undertake. He may prefer that the State should confine itself to purely secular education, leaving all religious teaching to voluntary agencies; or he may approve of the kind of undenominational religious teaching of the English School Board; or he may be a strong partisan of one of the many forms of distinctly accentuated denominational education. But when he comes to act as a responsible legislator, he should feel that the question is not merely what *he* considers the best, but also what the parents of the children most desire. It is true that the authority of parents is not absolutely recognised. The conviction that certain things are essential to the children and to the well-being and vigour of the State, and the conviction that parents are often by no means the best judges of this, make legislators, on some important subjects, override the wishes of the parents. The severe restrictions imposed on child labour; the measure—unhappily now greatly relaxed—providing for children's vaccination, and the legislation protecting children from ill-treatment by their parents are illustrations, and the most extensive and far-reaching of all exceptions is education. After much misgiving, both parties in the State have arrived at the conclusion that it is essential to the future of the children, and essential also to the maintenance of the relative position of England in the great competition of nations, that at least the rudiments of education should be made universal, and they are also convinced that this is one of the truths which perfectly ignorant parents are least competent to understand. Hence the system which of late years has so rapidly extended of compulsory education. Many nations have gone farther, and have claimed for the State the right of prescribing

¹ Lecky: *The Map of Life*, p. 142.

absolutely the kind of education that should be permitted, or at least the kind of education which shall be exclusively supported by State funds. In England this is not the case. A great variety of forms of education corresponding to the wishes and opinions of different classes of parents receive assistance from the State, subject to the conditions of submitting to certain tests of educational efficiency, and to a conscience clause protecting minorities from interference with their faith.'

Edmund Burke also was a believer in the wisdom of political compromise: 'All government,' he says, 'indeed every human benefit and enjoyment, every virtue and every prudent act, is founded on compromise and barter. We balance inconveniences, we give and take: we remit some rights that we may enjoy others. . . . Man acts from motives relative to his interests, and not on metaphysical speculations.'¹ This much at least is certain—neither the Education Act of 1870 nor any other measure of educational reform would have reached the statute book at that time, if its advocates had not combined with lofty purpose a remarkable deftness in the parliamentary game of give and take. One can only appreciate the significance of the compromise by studying it in relation to its Victorian background and by recalling the arguments which the various protagonists hurled at each other in the midst of the battle; indeed, without some comprehension of the why and wherefore of 'the education question,' it is doubtful whether you can find your way to-day along the highways and byways of educational administration in England. Once you realise the difficulties of the legislator, you begin to understand the meaning of such strange devices as the conscience clause, the strict injunctions about religious teaching and the curious provision about 'wear and tear.' At first sight the Acts of 1870 and 1902 seem too full of inhibitions to deserve to rank as great educational charters, but the proof of their statesmanship lies in what has been achieved under their auspices. If as we study their cautious clauses we feel a tinge of disappointment, let us not forget that—

'Wisdom is oftentimes nearer when we stoop
Than when we soar.'

THE LEGACY OF MISTRUST

The Reformation was, as we have seen, a great disruptive

¹ Burke: Speech on Conciliation with America.

influence, breaking up education and checking its development. The Tudors scarcely dared to touch the educational problem, because of its religious implications; and, as we have already noted, when Speaker Williams urged Elizabeth to provide schools for the people, because they were growing obstinate for lack of them, she turned a deaf ear. When her Ministers touched the problem in connection with the Poor Law, they found it, as the State Papers show, hopelessly entangled with the religious acerbities of the day. In one sense, the Tudor period was an appropriate one for a first attempt at State intervention; the Crown had a supremacy founded on might and buttressed by a political outlook which afterwards found philosophic expression in Hobbes' *Leviathan*. But serious intervention by the State was shrewdly postponed, and the Tudors contented themselves with the revival or establishment of a few Grammar Schools and a certain amount of educational enterprise through their Poor Law. The Stuarts were confronted with the same obstacles and substantially enlarged them; they were, more than any others, responsible for 'fixing' the Education Question, for they divided the nation and stimulated a civil war about religion. The Commonwealth men advocated, as we have seen, the development of a national system, but by doing so they put education right into the centre of the controversial cockpit. The squaring-up at the Revolution Settlement of 1688 produced the so-called Act of Toleration, but it also intensified the problem by dividing the nation into Whigs and Tories, and continuing the Restoration practice of excluding Dissenters and Catholics from national and local government. It also created a parliamentary oligarchy unsympathetic to the poor. Happily there developed a growing divergence between the letter of the law and the spirit of its administration, which leads Macaulay approvingly to observe that 'it is indeed most important that legislators and administrators should be versed in the philosophy of government.' This more tolerant outlook did not, however, help to solve the education question: it tended rather to encourage the entrenchment of conflicting educational traditions. As for the eighteenth century, it has been described as the darkest period in our educational history, but it made contributions to the education question which occupy an important place in the Victorian inheritance. It witnessed the promotion of schemes for providing education by means of voluntary agencies and trusts; the S.P.C.K., for

example, was founded at the very beginning of the century. No less important was the growth through the Poor Law of the principles of grants-in-aid, rate-maintenance, and local public control over institutions.

Although popular education had thus been grossly neglected for four centuries, it was never a problem wholly absent from the minds of those who thought seriously about public affairs. Wycliffe had had something to say just before the Reformation about the desirability of State intervention, and had advocated the diversion of the revenues of the religious houses to the provision of education; incidentally, he had pleaded also for the coequal treatment of boys and girls. Many of the leading political thinkers after the Reformation also paid attention to the position of education in the society of their day. 'Thinkers from Bacon to Locke,' says Mr. Gooch, 'statesmen from James I to Halifax devoted themselves to working out a new basis of human association in place of the feudal and ecclesiastical principles which had disappeared for ever,' and several of them, Bacon and Locke, for example, applied their constructive minds to education. But throughout this long period the ruling families cared little for popular education; and when they did it was in a charity or poor-law spirit. This indeed was the prevailing attitude in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, shared alike, but for different motives, by the friends and enemies of class and privilege. When political writers championed the cause of State intervention, they aroused, not only the antagonism of the privileged interests, but also the opposition of radicalism and dissent. For example, the enlightened Joseph Priestley, in his *Essay on the First Principles of Government*, which was first published in 1768, advances a strong plea for individualism, and takes the view that while the State functions admirably as a policeman, it is not competent to interfere in matters affecting spiritual freedom, including education. 'It became,' says Professor Adamson, 'an accepted article of the radical creed that, in the interest of liberty, the state's intervention in public education should be reduced as much as possible; in consequence, the history of English Educational Administration between 1790 and 1870 makes a very slow movement from private, co-operative activity to public control grudgingly admitted.'¹

Godwin was perhaps the most advanced thinker of the period

¹ Adamson: *Outline of English Education, 1760-1902* (1925), p. 20.

in which the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries merge, and he was definitely opposed to the intervention of the State, regarding it as the stronghold of privilege and property. 'It was something of a paradox,' says Sir Ernest Barker in an illuminating summary of the position, 'and no little misfortune, that the most advanced thinkers in England were the most opposed to the inevitable line of any real advance in education, and the most inimical to the assumption of any responsibility by the State. Their theory postulated more from the working of the voluntary principle than it could ever, under any conditions, have supplied; and in the actual conditions of the time they simply supported a system under which the private subscriptions of one class—largely given for denominational reasons—were used to provide the education of another, which by the mere fact of receiving aid, naturally came to be regarded as a class of dependants. They dreamed of "balance" and they actually promoted the rivalry and jealousy of different religious bodies; they hoped for "freedom," and they found that they had encouraged class differences.'¹ The opposition to a national plan for education was widespread and powerful. The 'haves' did not want to see the 'have-nots' elevated above their station; the Church saw in State interference an encroachment upon her traditional supremacy; while the Dissenters having suffered so much from Government did not want to see it in control of education. 'Nothing, indeed, is more important in the history of English political philosophy than to realise that from Stuart times the Nonconformists were deeply bitten with distrust of Government.'² In an atmosphere so beclouded by mistrust there seemed to be no hope of agreement upon an educational system on a national scale.

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

Montaigne relates how judges in his sixteenth-century France had just sentenced an old lady for witchcraft because the evidence left no room for doubt in their minds that she had deliberately turned herself into a fox in order to steal some chickens. If educated people come to such a conclusion in this enlightened age, he argued, is it credible that people will ever cease to believe in witchcraft? All the same, we gave up believing in witchcraft during the eighteenth century and thus closed a long chapter in

¹ Barker: *National Character* (1927), p. 254.

² Laski: *Political Thought from Locke to Bentham* (H.U.L.), p. 217.

the history of human torture. Similarly—although we have other ways of being cruel—we now regard with horror the ghastly child brutality which seemed natural and inevitable to good citizens of the period following the industrial revolution. How far the education settlement of 1870 was due to the beginning of a reaction against such barbarism it is impossible to say. But that a more human outlook was an active influence on the side of compromise there can be no doubt; for there must have been many who, dubious about the Bill on religious grounds, were swayed by the knowledge that if it failed to pass thousands of children would continue to live in ignorance and neglect. The condition of children in the congested ill-planned towns had become a scandal disturbing to the national conscience, and men of every shade of opinion realised the necessity for some measure of educational reform. The widening of the franchise—the Tory ‘leap into the dark’ of 1867—had created an electorate which was sending into Parliament a new type of member, and the growth of a wealthy middle class with an industrial and commercial background was not without its effect on the aristocratic outlook. The old individualism was giving way rapidly to a more collectivist way of thought, and it was a time in which there was a sharp cleavage of opinion between the older and the rising generation. When Pitt introduced his Poor Law Bill in 1796, he spoke quite sincerely of the five-year-old child’s value in the labour-market: ‘Experience,’ he said, ‘has shown how much can be done by the industry of children and the advantages of early employing them in such branches of manufacture as they are capable to execute.’ Readers of Mr. and Mrs. Hammond’s books about the town and village labourer have been made familiar with the details of child cruelty which respected industrialists committed without sense of wrong-doing; and reading them one realises how great is our debt to reformers of various types—Robert Owen, Lovett, Shaftesbury, Dickens, Charles Kingsley and many others who in different ways helped to bring about a less harsh attitude to children.

The Children’s Employment Commission, which reported in 1842, provides a lasting picture of the child degradation which the early Victorians were willing to tolerate. ‘Chained, belted,’ runs a description in its report of scenes in a West Riding colliery, ‘harnessed like dogs in a go-cart, black, saturated with wet, and more than half-naked—crawling upon their hands and feet and

dragging their heavy loads behind them—they present an appearance indescribably disgusting and unnatural.’ Such cruelty was due largely no doubt to the economic gospel of self-interest which the employing class professed, but it was due also to an absence of sympathetic understanding of children: the England of the early Victorians was never a childhood’s paradise whether in the cottage or the well-provided household. ‘When the nineteenth century opens,’ it has been well said, ‘the child was in disgrace’; restrictive awkward clothes, the grim moralising of storybooks, the pains and penalties meted out at school and home and even the hymns like those of Dr. Watts suggest that the well-to-do child had its fair share of bogeys, and in certain respects—mentally and psychologically—suffered almost as much as did its poor contemporaries through the torture and wearying of their little bodies. Those who were brought up in god-fearing households did an incredible amount of church-going and heard a great deal about religion in a controversial sense. ‘A Broad Churchman,’ says Dean Inge of his tractarian childhood, ‘we were given to understand was absolutely outside the pale. The awful fate of Koran, Dathan and Abiram was impressed upon us in such a way that we should not have been much surprised to see the Methodist Minister swallowed up by the earth.’¹ Mr. C. B. Cochran, born into an evangelical family in the ‘sixties, says that the most vivid impressions of his childhood were the High Church vicar and Mr. Gladstone, both of whom he associated, from what he heard of them, with the Devil himself who, ‘horns, hoof and tail, was a very real personality in the sort of household I was born into nearly sixty years ago. He was still used by nurses as a bogey to terrify children into obedience. Quite trivial offences natural to all children might draw down his appalling wrath, and the most vivid pictures were presented to us of hell with its flames and torments and lake of brimstone.’² Perhaps Herbert Spencer’s *Education*, published in the ‘fifties, with its foreshadowing of a science of child psychology, marks the dawn of a new belief that childhood was not meant to be unhappy and that children are entitled to a life of their own in which the asperities of the Olympians have no place. *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* is usually accepted as an exceptional drama of parental harshness; but does it not possibly symbolise

¹ Inge: *Vale* (Longmans), p. 9.

² Alan Pryce Jones and others: *Little Innocents* (Cobden-Sanderson), p. 75.

the clash which, owing to a rapidly changing outlook, was being fought out in many mid-Victorian homes, between the passing and the rising generation? Certainly the battle which raged at Wimpole Street helped Elizabeth Barrett to sympathise with the poor children of her day:

‘For oh!’ say the children, ‘we are weary
And we cannot run or leap;
If we cared for any meadows, it were merely
To drop down in them and sleep.

‘For all day we drag our burden tiring
Through the coal-dark underground:
Or all day we drive the wheels of iron,
In the factories, round and round.’

‘The Law,’ it has been said, ‘is the public conscience,’ and it is likely that an undercurrent of shame at the miserable fate of countless children had much to do with the acceptance of Forster’s proposals. Certainly there were instances of men who voted for them while regarding them as thoroughly obnoxious and antagonistic to their religious principles. The great philanthropist, Lord Shaftesbury, provides a notable illustration of such lukewarm support. As the fount and inspiration of the Ragged School movement, he knew all about the wretchedness of the children, but as a devout evangelical he feared that the Forster Act would put an end to his Ragged Schools and the religious teaching which they gave. ‘The Ragged Schools,’ he said, ‘with all their Divine polity, with all their burning and fruitful love for the poor, with all their prayers and harvests for the temporal and eternal welfare of forsaken, heathenish, destitute, sorrowful, and yet innocent children, must perish under this all-conquering march of intellectual power.’ So he moved an amendment to the Bill proposing to reduce the age-limits (five to thirteen) to four and ten. ‘Fortunately,’ say Mr. and Mrs. Hammond, ‘he was beaten on this occasion, though he carried his amendment providing for the exemption of any child over ten on an inspector’s certificate.’¹ But he did not withhold his vote from the Bill in its final shape; and one can only assume that he, and others similarly opposed to it from various religious

¹ J. L. and B. Hammond: *Lord Shaftesbury* (Penguin), pp. 236-7.

motives, felt unable to take the extreme course of preventing the establishment of a national system of education.

THE ECONOMY OF CHARITY

An heroic attempt was made to deal with elementary education through the medium of voluntary organisations subsidised and mildly stimulated by the State. The most popular of all these philanthropic efforts, however, owed nothing to the State; this was the Sunday School movement, the principal aim of which was to teach young and old alike to read and value the Bible. It was fortunate in its founders, Robert Raikes in England and Thomas Charles in Wales; both men of outstanding character and single-minded devotion to the cause. Raikes, a Gloucester journalist, founded his 'Society for the Establishment and Support of Sunday Schools throughout the Kingdom' in 1785, and evidence before the Select Committee on Education in 1834 showed that the total number of Sunday scholars in England and Wales was by then 1,500,000, with 160,000 teachers. No payment was made by the parents and the expenses were met by subscriptions or Church collections. Raikes' original intention was that these schools should be managed by local committees, consisting of Churchmen and Nonconformists in equal numbers; but the movement quickly developed along denominational lines. The schools were particularly successful in the great cities, and the Select Committee of 1834 listened to an account by the Manchester Borough Reeve, a zealous Sunday School teacher, of a school in that city which had 2,700 scholars taught by 120 unsalaried teachers, most of them former pupils.¹ In her *A Century of City Government*, Lady Shena D. Simon pays tribute to the civilising influence of the Sunday Schools in Manchester just before the Victorian era opened. 'There were,' she says, 'eighty-six Sunday Schools, of which twenty-five were Church of England, eighteen Wesleyan, nine Roman Catholic, nine Independent and the rest divided amongst other Nonconformist bodies. The number of children attending them was 33,196, of which 31 per cent. attended those attached to the Church of England. Reading was taught in all but two, writing in the majority, but not usually on Sunday. Evening Schools were held in connection with most of the Sunday Schools, to which not only went the children who had finished twelve hours in the factory, and longer

¹ De Montmorency: *State Intervention in English Education*, p. 206.

hours in unregulated employment, but older boys and girls, and grown men and women. Lending libraries and benefit and clothing societies were formed in connection with seventy-four.¹ The story of the Sunday School in Wales shows that the movement was no less successful in a rural environment; and in Wales it attracted the adult population more than it did in England, where except among the Quakers it was mainly concerned with children. Moreover, in Wales it was, through the influence of Thomas Charles, closely associated with the Calvinistic Methodist revival, and it had as a kind of secular counterpart in most chapels 'the Literary Meeting,' which did much to stimulate a renaissance of Welsh culture. 'The starting of Sunday Schools by Charles of Bala,' says Mr. Watkin Davies, 'was one of the direct results of the Revival. From that day to the present the influence of these schools has been incalculably great. Children had their place in them; but their primary function was the education of adults. The term "school" when applied to them is somewhat misleading: they were rather small study-circles, presided over by a democratically chosen leader, and, with the Bible as text-book, discussing almost every question pertaining to this world and the next. Sunday Schools were quickly adopted by all the Nonconformist bodies, and by the Episcopal Church as well; and among the former at least Church membership implied membership of the school. Owing to this, the minds of the people of Wales became saturated with the Scriptures. The geography of Palestine was more familiar to them than that of England. Bible stories, Bible arguments and Bible metaphors were become interwoven with the very texture of their thought.'²

The Voluntary Societies which provided Elementary Schools for which they subsequently received grants-in-aid begin their history at the opening of the nineteenth century. The first to be established were the National Society 'for promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church,' and the British and Foreign School Society in the schools of which no distinctive religious teaching was given. The Wesleyan Educational Committee was formed in the first year of Victoria's reign and the Congregational Board of Education six years later. Roman Catholic education was not free to develop until after the

¹ Simon: *A Century of City Government* (Allen & Unwin), p. 213.

² Watkin Davies: *Wales* (H.U.L.), pp. 222-4.

Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829, but as we have seen in 1847 the Catholic Poor School Committee was founded, taking the place of an earlier organisation known as the 'Catholic Institute.' The Jews established several schools in the large towns; they had a Special Committee for discussions with the State Educational Department, but they do not appear to have had a national committee of management. The Voluntary Societies and the kindred organisations were always fighting an uphill battle against overwhelming odds; and the fact that they failed lamentably to meet the educational needs of their time should not diminish our appreciation of their loyalty to their particular cause or of their valiant efforts to raise funds. It should, however, serve to remind us that there is an inevitable and somewhat narrow limit to what assisted voluntarism can accomplish, and it should warn us against the convenient assumption that large-scale educational problems such as 'the service of youth' can be solved by *laissez-faire*. Of the 8,798 assisted voluntary schools in 1870, 6,724 belonged to the Church of England, 1,691 were 'British' and undenominational and 383 belonged to other denominations and interests. Lord de Grey, as Lord President, when moving the second reading of the Bill in the House of Lords, illustrated the inadequacy of accommodation thus provided by a statistical reference to four cities as follows:

	<i>Children of School Age</i>	<i>School Places Available</i>
Birmingham	. 64,787	30,169
Manchester	. 66,591	36,612
Leeds	. 45,444	24,295
Liverpool	. 91,375	46,739

Of this assisted voluntarism as a method of providing education, he observes: 'Where zealous, self-denying men, for the sake of their countrymen and of great public interests would come forward with their money, there it aided; but poor districts, whether in town or country, which were unable to do anything, it left alone, and it is not wonderful, therefore, that a very large amount of ground is still uncovered.' It is much to the credit of the Voluntary Societies that they appreciated the importance of training teachers and, assisted by grants, they had done much important work of this character before 1870, by which date thirty-three colleges had been established. The National Society

was training teachers at colleges like St. Mark's, Chelsea, White-lands and Battersea, the British and Foreign School Society at Borough Road and Stockwell, the Wesleyan denomination at Westminster and the Roman Catholics at Hammersmith and Liverpool. The Home and Colonial Society had as far back as 1836 recognised the need for Infants' teachers and had set about training them. Although importance was thus assigned to the training of the teacher, he received little encouragement in the way of salary or status: the average salary of a certificated master in 1870 was £96 and of a certificated mistress £57. The size of classes was so large as to make teaching in any individual sense an impossibility, and it is interesting to notice that Bartley, when calculating the number of additional teachers that would be required for the new era rendered possible by the passing of the Education Act of 1870, bases his computation on an average of 85 pupils for each trained teacher.¹

It should be remembered, however, that in the rival methods of Bell and Lancaster, which the National and British and Foreign Societies respectively championed, the 'monitorial system of instruction' was the central feature. The principal function of the trained teacher was to keep order while the monitors imparted knowledge; 'Mr. Lancaster,' said Mrs. Trimmer, the author of *The Economy of Charity* and other books about education, 'has given convincing proofs that with good management the children of the common people may all be instructed in reading, writing and arithmetic at a moderate expense and trained in habits of civility and order.' By Joseph Lancaster's 'new and mechanical system of education,' runs an advertisement in the *Star*, 'above one thousand children may be taught and governed by one master only.' It was an unfortunate tradition, from which the Elementary School has not yet completely recovered; but it was cheap, and that was a vital consideration in an educational scheme which relied largely upon voluntary effort. The average cost per pupil in the assisted voluntary schools in 1869 was £1 5s. 5d., and it was defrayed by Government grant 9s. 7d., school fees 8s. 4d., and benefactions amounted to 7s. 3½d. This leaves a small deficit, and recalls the observation of Mr. Micawber about annual incomes. But the Act of 1870 intensified the financial difficulties of the voluntary authorities, who somewhat unfairly were inclined to place the blame on the officials administering the Act. 'The

¹ Bartley: *The Schools for the People* (1871), p. 27.

strain upon the managers of voluntary schools commenced thus early,' says Dean Gregory, for many years treasurer of the National Society, 'and has been continued ever since, the apparent object of some School Boards, and, in the opinion of some persons, of a few officials of high rank in the Education Department, being to destroy the voluntary schools by compelling them to provide much larger incomes for their maintenance than is convenient, or in some cases possible . . . and during the twenty-four years which have elapsed since the Education Act of 1870 the Church has lost 864 of her schools.'¹

HOW STATE INTERVENTION BEGAN

Lord Hewart's *New Despotism* has created an impression that government by administrative action without much statutory authority is a modern development. The story of State intervention in education, however, shows that bureaucracy—'government by officials'—was practised effectively in the early Victorian period, and the subsequent parliamentary compromise was largely based on the knowledge gained by enlightened officials in the administration of grants-in-aid under a procedure for which there was only slender authority. Before bureaucracy thus took a hand in the promotion of popular education, Parliament had done a little, but only in connection with factory legislation. In 1802, at the instance of the first Sir Robert Peel, a Bill was passed, now generally known as the first Factory Act, designed 'for the better preservation of the health and morals of apprentices and others employed in cotton and other mills.' Many of the cotton mills were crowded with overworked children, and oddly enough one of the employers who most seriously offended in this respect was Sir Robert Peel himself. The Act has an educational significance, because it stipulated that reading, writing and arithmetic should be taught during part of the working day, which was not to exceed twelve hours exclusive of meal-times. An hour every Sunday was to be devoted to religious instruction, upon which the children were to be examined by the parish clergyman once a year. Once a month, at least, they were to attend church, and they were to be confirmed between the ages of fourteen and eighteen. Boys and girls were to sleep in separate rooms and not more than two in a bed. There was a considerable outcry against these modest requirements, not on religious

¹ Gregory; *Elementary Education* (National Society, 1895), p. 136.

grounds, however, but because the Bill was deemed to be 'prejudicial to the Cotton Trade.'¹ In 1807 Samuel Whitbread, one of the most persistent reformers of his day, introduced a Bill which, if it had become law, would have secured a national system of rate-aided Elementary Education, but it was rejected by the House of Lords upon the advice of the Archbishop of Canterbury, 'who objected to any system that put the control of education elsewhere than in the hands of the bishop of the diocese.'² 'It is impossible,' remarks Sir Henry Craik, 'now to say what might have been the result of a State system introduced thus early, and with the machinery proposed. Possibly the religious disputes that afterwards arose might have been avoided. . . . But it is at least curious to note that in 1807 the beginning suggested for legalised operations was a compulsory local rate—that which in the result came only as a supplement to the action of the central authority.'³ Lord Brougham's Bill of 1820 met a similar fate; and although he was a friend of the unprivileged—University College, London, 'Brougham's Cockney College' as it was called, was founded largely as the result of his determination to see the establishment of university education free from Church prerogative—his great effort for Elementary Education perished because of Nonconformist antagonism to State interference. In 1833 Roebuck brought forward a Bill to provide for the compulsory education 'of the whole people': the debate upon it occupies thirty-five pages of *Hansard*, but it also failed to pass largely because, in the words of Sir Robert Peel, compulsory education 'must almost of necessity, interfere with religious opinion.' Brougham and Roebuck had, however, greatly stimulated public feeling by the vigour of their arguments and the persistence of their propaganda on behalf of national education. Their conception of education did much to disintegrate the charity school view of the curriculum, and make enlightened people realise that elementary education meant something more than learning to read and write. 'Education,' said Mr. Roebuck, 'is usually supposed to signify merely learning to read and write, and sometimes, by a stretch of liberality, it is made to include arithmetic. . . . It means the so framing the mind of the individual that he may become a useful and virtuous member of society in the various relations of life. It means making him a good child,

¹ J. L. and B. Hammond: *Town Labourer*, p. 152.

² *Ibid.*, p. 57.

³ Craik: *State in its Relation to Education* (1896), p. 11.

a good parent, a good neighbour, a good citizen, in short a good man.'

It was at this period that public opinion began in a healthy democratic fashion to assert itself; and all over the country efforts of various kinds were made to focus attention on the education question. 'There are periods when great ideas are in the air,' says Bagehot, 'and when, from some cause or other, even common persons seem to partake of an unusual elevation.' The eighteenth-thirties was such an epoch in our social history, a decade in which people in all parts of the country grouped themselves together with the object of breaking down barriers which stood in the way of progress. This progressive temper touched education at many points: Arnold and his staff were reforming Rugby, the disciples of Birkbeck were creating the Mechanics Institutes, Robert Owen was inspiring the establishment of Infants' Schools, Lovett rousing the working classes to a sense of emancipation through education, and Kay-Shuttleworth and his friends in Manchester producing reports about education and social conditions, so exact in their portrayal of misery as to make 'a deep and melancholy impression on the public mind.'¹ Men gave expression to their disturbed consciences in public speeches and in pamphlets, and an unusual feature of these years was the fashion of petitioning Parliament to devise a national plan for education. Such manifestations of opinion reached the House of Commons during these ten years from the Unitarians of Salford, the inhabitants of Liverpool, the Literary and Scientific Institution of Worcester, the towns of Epping and Harlow in the county of Essex, and, most surprising of all, from the inhabitants of Brechin in Scotland, praying for the speedy establishment of a school in every parish of England and Ireland under arrangements similar to those in practice in Scotland. Here, then, was *vox populi* with a vengeance; and it was not without its influence upon those in authority. For realising that Parliament was not ripe for a comprehensive measure of educational reform, they adopted a less ambitious and less spectacular expedient. On an August afternoon, in a House of Commons in which there were many empty benches, they incorporated in the Budget of 1833 a vote of £20,000 to aid the erection of schools by private subscription. It was carried by 50 votes to 26, and of those who spoke in

¹ Quoted from Faucher's *Manchester in 1844*, by Lady S. D. Simon, in *A Century of City Government*, p. 24.

opposition the most eloquent was that doughty reformer William Cobbett, who contended that popular education merely increased crime and that its expansion, by adding to the number of teachers, was creating a new race of idlers. Thus State intervention in English Elementary Education arrived almost by a backstairs, but 'from that moment the House of Commons, amid all its drifting and irresolution, never turned back.'¹

Two years after Victoria's accession, the vote was increased to £30,000 and a Special Committee of the Privy Council was appointed to supervise the distribution of the grant. A small staff of officers was engaged and the first H.M. Inspectors were appointed: an Education Department had come into being. A great debt is due to these early administrators, of whom the chief or 'secretary' was the Kay-Shuttleworth who, as mentioned in the last paragraph, had taken a prominent part in Manchester in stimulating an interest in educational reform. 'A born educator,' runs Matthew Arnold's description of him, 'an earnest student of methods and problems of education.' These first officials had the wisdom to avoid hard-and-fast rules and to concentrate in co-operation with the Voluntary Societies upon encouraging local effort and initiative. They were also shrewd enough to realise that the quality of the teaching staffs was all-important. 'The plan which the advisers of the Government in this new attempt had most at heart was that of a Normal Training College for teachers. Logically, this was the proper beginning for any system of national education; the first essential being the provision of a body of trained teachers who could carry on, with a certain standard of efficiency, such schools as might be built. But it was surrounded by so much matter for dispute, gathered during a generation of contention, that the proposal all but wrecked the Government of Lord Melbourne. The Church objected to the scheme on a double ground. In the first place, the religious instruction in the normal school was to be upon the combined system; that is to say, secular instruction was to be given in common, but Dissenters were to be taught religion by teachers of their own communion. This placed Dissenters on a footing of equality, which offended the Church. This is not the place to enter upon the justice of the grounds upon which that jealousy was based; it is enough to note the fact as one of the difficulties which those who sought to develop a national system had to

¹ De Montmorency: *State Intervention in English Education*, p. 240.

encounter. But this was not the only reason for the attitude of opposition assumed by the Church. The function of training and licensing teachers was one which she still claimed under the Canons of 1604, and she opposed, therefore, the interference of the State with a function which she believed to be her own: The contention became so keen that the Government was compelled to abandon the scheme.¹ It had the effect, however, of rousing the Societies to the importance of the provision of Training Colleges, and as we have already noted, they took the matter in hand, establishing colleges under their respective auspices. An interesting fact in connection with this first administrative period is that although there was a great deal of local effort and initiative, the school manager was never a serious factor in the developments which took place. 'Indeed,' says Sir Graham Balfour, 'it is very curious how imperceptibly that important figure of the latter half of the nineteenth century, the School Manager, steals into existence.'² The success of the Department may be said to have been due to the foresight of its leaders, to their recognition that educational progress depended upon a supply of well-educated teachers and to their tactful co-operation with the rival societies.

ROBERT LOWE AND PAYMENT BY RESULTS

In 1856 a brief statute gave education an official representative in the House of Commons—the Vice-President of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education—and two years later the Newcastle Commission was set up to report on 'the state of popular education in England, and as to the measures required for an extension of sound and cheap elementary instruction.' The four-volume Report of this Commission is a valuable document and provided much of the ammunition used in the debates of 1870. But it had many critics, and not least among them was the Vice-President himself, Robert Lowe, who was particularly offended by the inaccuracy of many of the statistics, as to which he scathingly observed that 'it would be paying too great a compliment to these figures to base any calculation on them.' This, however, did not prevent him from concentrating upon the least fortunate of the Commission's recommendations and producing the notorious 'Revised Code,' the guiding principle of which was 'payment by results.' The Commissioners had expressed the

¹ Craik: *The State in its Relation to Education*, pp. 17, 18.

² Balfour: *Educational Administration* (Clarendon Press, 1921), p. 9.

opinion that, in spite of the money spent on education by the State and the Societies, the great majority of children were not learning the three Rs. 'There is only one way,' they said, 'to secure this result, which is to institute a searching examination by competent authority of every child in every school to which grants are to be paid, with the view of ascertaining whether these indispensable elements of knowledge are thoroughly acquired, and to make the prospects and position of the teacher dependent, to a considerable extent, on the results of these examinations. If teachers had a motive of this kind to see that all the children under their charge really learned to read, write and cypher thoroughly well, there can be little doubt they would generally find means to secure that result, and the presence of such a motive would do more towards the production of the required result than any remodelling of the training college system.' Lowe's Code was designed to give full and complete effect to this recommendation; and under his Code the grants to the schools were paid subject entirely to the results of an individual examination by H.M. Inspector. Since 1846 the State had paid fixed grants direct to teachers in augmentation of the salary which they received from Managers, who were required to 'provide teachers with a house rent free and a further salary equal to an amount not less than twice the augmentation grant.' Under the Revised Code 'payments were to be made, not personally to teachers any longer, but to the managers of the schools. Thus the teacher ceased to be in any degree the employee of the State, and became merely the servant of the managers, who were no longer bound to observe any proportion between the salary they paid him and the amount of grant he earned from the Government, but might drive with him the best bargain they could conclude.' The State has never since made direct salary payments to teachers, who now receive their salaries through the Local Authority to whom a fixed proportion of the cost is paid by the Government. Moreover, since 1921 the general adoption of the Burnham Scale by Local Authorities has substituted collective for local bargaining in the settlement of salary issues.

Robert Lowe is the villain of the Victorian educational story. Although his name is so closely associated with a system of grants, his dislike of public expenditure was such that he resented the whole idea of grants-in-aid. Referring to the tentative way in which education grants by the State began and the manner in

which subsequently year after year they were continued, he told the House of Commons that they reminded him of a man who went to call on a friend and stayed for thirty years. But as grants had obviously come to stay, he was resolved to devise a system that would ensure that they were fully earned. 'If the new system,' he said of his Code, 'will not be cheap, it will be efficient, and if it will not be efficient, it will be cheap.' Actually it was both cheap and inefficient. The State grant fell from £930,000 in 1859 to £656,000 in 1865, and the standard of education seriously declined.

Robert Lowe belonged to the old Whig tradition; within the Liberal Cabinet he always resisted the tide of progress, and he it was who led the 'Cave of Adullam,' that little group which prevented Gladstone broadening the franchise in 1866. 'He turned the controversy into a class question, by contending that working men as such ought to be excluded from the franchise on account of their moral and intellectual unfitness.' The Liberal Cabinet fell in consequence and it was the Conservatives who extended the franchise before being replaced by Gladstone's first Ministry in 1868. Lowe's great rival within the party, especially on educational business, was W. E. Forster, who represented the new liberalism of the middle-class business community. Lowe had been nurtured at Winchester and New Collège, and he was as a young man in considerable demand as a classical 'coach' at Oxford, where he specially enjoyed acting as an examiner. 'There was an anecdote current in the University of Oxford down to my time,' says Lord Bryce, 'that when Lowe was examining in the examination which the statutes called "Responsions," the dons "Little-go," and the undergraduates "Smalls," a friend coming in while the *viva voce* was in progress, asked him how he was getting on. "Excellently," said Lowe, "five men plucked already, and the sixth very shaky."'¹ At a later stage in his career he became in Gladstone's first Ministry Chancellor of the Exchequer, and ultimately found his way into the House of Lords as Lord Sherbrooke. As his autobiography shows, he ended his days, as perhaps he deserved to do, a soured and disappointed man. His caustic qualities had been too pronounced even for his friends, and his love of 'plucking' people had earned him a double dose of unpopularity. A typical story of him, in the

¹ Bryce: *Studies in Contemporary Biography* (Macmillan Company, 1903), p. 301 note.

days when he ruled the Education Department, is that of his interview with an enthusiastic H.M.I. who had called to see him. 'I know what you've come about,' he said, 'the science of education. There is none. Good morning.' Much has been said about the iniquity of his system of payment by results; but it represented, not only his philosophy, but that of many of the upper and middle class of his day. He made a gospel of value for money; and knowing from experience that crammed instruction can be measured, he applied the yardstick rigidly and ruthlessly. In one respect his regime was beneficial. Although it reduced the grants, it produced more schools, 1,500 of them. But qualitatively it was a sad failure. 'The mode of teaching in the primary schools,' said Matthew Arnold, 'has fallen off in intelligence, spirit, and inventiveness. It could not well be otherwise.' There was an outcry which found expression in Parliament; and leading members began to ask what this Revised Code was. Parliament had never heard of it: the susceptibilities of Westminster were roused. There was 'new despotism' talk. 'The Vice-President,' said Lord Robert Cecil, the future Marquis of Salisbury, 'declares that his department possesses a quasi-legislative power. There is one legislative power in the Kingdom, and that is Parliament.' Lowe resigns his Vice-Presidency. At the same time Unions and Leagues fulminate about Education and propound plans for Reform; and then on February 17th, 1870, Forster presented his Bill designed, as he said, 'to cover the country with good schools and get parents to send their children to those schools.'

W. E. FORSTER

Although Forster is the political architect of our educational system, there are not many to-day who do him reverence. For the oblivion into which his memory has passed, there are no doubt several reasons. Parliament, for example, does not care enough about education to canonise its votaries, nor does the nation look to the educational world for its heroes. But our forgetfulness of the debt we owe him must be partly attributed to the character of Forster himself. His solid worth had no celebrity value: his gold was the kind that does not glitter. Of Quaker stock and Quaker schooling, although he ceased to be a member of the Society of Friends he yet remained to the last truly religious and more anxious to do good than to be seen doing it.

For him honesty was always the best policy, and it was of his integrity, not his brilliance, that his contemporaries spoke when he died. Brave, true, loyal, 'so honest, so unselfish and courageous,' such were the epithets that Victoria Regina chose for her letter of condolence, and Gladstone for once strikes the same note as his sovereign, and extols 'his genuine and independent character.' Although one of the most effective speakers of his day, he never attempted to emulate the oratory of his great colleagues Gladstone and Bright; his speeches did not come easily to him, he had to work at them, and always they were like himself 'somewhat rough and unpolished,' but his audience invariably knew that 'he would so far as in him lay tell them that which was true . . . and so, even when they differed from him in judgment, they learned to trust him in statement.'¹ He played an important part in many of the major political issues of the time, notably the Irish Question and the cause of Imperial Federation, which was near to his heart; and he showed exceptional courage when, after the Phoenix Park murder, he succeeded Lord Frederick Cavendish as Irish Secretary. But his greatest parliamentary achievement was unquestionably his handling of his Education Bill, when assailed by protracted and bitter opposition from both sides of the House; integrity and persistence succeeded where adroitness and eloquence would have been of no avail.

Like Cobden and many other northern worthies, he hailed from the south; or to be more precise from the south-west, Bradpole in Dorsetshire. But if Bradpole was his birthplace, Bradford and Burley-in-Wharfedale were his spiritual homes. At Burley with Jane Arnold as his wife he led his happy family life; there we are told his own sanctum, 'the library,' was always the family room, 'as might have been seen by the various tokens of feminine, not to say juvenile, occupations intruding amongst the piles of newspapers, the letters, Blue Books and despatch boxes.' Bradford was the centre of his business activity and his constituency throughout his political life. Before he settled in the wool-stapling trade with the Fisons at Bradford, he had many shots at finding a career for himself; and as a young man went through the tribulations of frustration and failure. His first employment—the weaving of hand-loom camlets at Norwich—came to an end because of the failure of the firm; and presently the Pease

¹ Wemyss Reid: *Life of W. E. Forster* (Chapman & Hall, 1889), p. 606.

family rescued him from unemployment and he entered one of their woollen mills at Darlington. Here he discovered his preference for North Country life and ways, and soon settled down in his partnership in the Bradford woollen industry in which he continued for the rest of his life. His loyalty to the North was unswerving, and in the last year of his parliamentary life his time and energy were largely devoted to the task of shaping the Manchester Ship Canal Bill. He was Chairman of the Committee appointed to consider this difficult project, fraught with such consequence for North Country trade and commerce. 'In two previous sessions it had been impossible to get the Bill through both Houses of Parliament, because of the immense magnitude of the cases which were presented on behalf of the promoters and opponents of the measure respectively. It seemed certain that the Bill would fail again for the same reason; and it undoubtedly would have failed if it had fallen into the hands of any man whose energy and power of work were less than Forster's. As it was, by dint of sheer indomitable industry, such as that which in past times had enabled him to manage the business of the Education Office and to see the Education Bill through committee, and more recently had aided him in the performance of his great work in Ireland, he was able to carry the enquiry regarding the canal through committee, and to secure for the people of Manchester the opportunity which they so eagerly coveted.' Indeed, it was generally believed that his death in 1886 at the age of sixty-seven was hastened by the stress of his labours on the Ship Canal Bill and his struggle at the same time with certain Bradford Liberals who, having constituted a caucus, were claiming certain rights over their member which Forster with his sturdy spirit of independence felt obliged to resist.

The personality of W. E. Forster has a considerable bearing on our educational compromise; and there can be little doubt that by temperament and experience he was peculiarly fitted for the task of winning approval to a concordat in which such a variety of religious and political interests had to be reconciled. His doctrinal detachment helped him in steering his frail craft between the Scylla of Anglicanism and the Charybdis of Dissent. 'I am not a Dissenter,' he told the House, 'I wish that I could see my way clearly to belong to any religious community'; and on his death-bed he was heard to murmur, 'Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief.' His Quaker contacts—his correspondence is

studded with 'thees' and 'thous'—and his long association with 'Uncle Buxton' in the anti-slavery cause secured for him the confidence of an influential body of philanthropic opinion. His big, burly, rough-hewn appearance and, to quote Scott-Holland, 'honest and pure grey-blue eyes'—his North Country industrial outlook, and his personification of the solid virtues which middle-class Victorianism ranked so high, also stood him in good stead; for there was a large section of opinion, the new ruling class which the Industrial Revolution had created, which liked his unpolished ways and his blunt direct speech. 'The hirsute and eminently unaristocratic figure of W. E. Forster, whom Gladstone put in charge of education,' says Professor Trevelyan, 'made visible the fact that government by the Whig families was not to be revived.' Again, there was no question about the depth of his interest in elementary education, nor of his close study of the problem. That could not be said of any other member of the front benches on either side of the House. What about Gladstone? it may be asked. There was no doubt about the Prime Minister's interest in and service to University Reform, but in his attitude to the education of the people he was essentially the Squire of Hawarden, devoted to his Church and his national schools. 'His private interest in public education,' says John Morley, 'did not amount to zeal, and it was at bottom the interest of a Churchman.' Gladstone's interventions during the debates on the Bill were both adroit and statesmanlike, but the knowledge and the earnest fervour for educational progress came from Forster. It was a subject that had interested him from the days of his youth: as a schoolboy he had won praise for an essay on 'The advantages of education to civilisation,' and he had struggled hard as a young man to provide himself by home study with the education that his more fortunate contemporaries had been able to receive at the University. It was perhaps characteristic of him that his interest in the Classics was slight; his bent was Mathematics, and when learning the wool trade under the tutelage of the Pease family at Darlington he was in the habit of writing home for books so that he could 'improve himself' in the evenings. 'I do not know whether you are going to send a parcel,' he writes to his parents, 'but if you are, please send Abbot's *Trigonometry*, Hamilton's *Conic Sections*, Lacroix's *Differential Calculus*, and especially Taylor's *Elements of Algebra*.'¹

¹ Wemyss Reid: *Life of W. E. Forster*, p. 55.

His interest in the education question was therefore not, as it was for so many others in the House of Commons, only political and controversial: it was also social and educational. Social because philanthropy was in his Quaker blood: his father and mother had devoted their lives to the anti-slavery crusade, his first visit to the House of Commons was as a boy of sixteen with his uncle, Fowell Buxton, who remained to his death his chief guide and philosopher, and his friends were people whose consciences were stricken by the poverty and degradation of the labouring folk. 'I wish parsons, Church and other,' he once wrote to Charles Kingsley, 'would all remember as much as you do that children are growing into savages while they are trying to prevent one another from helping them.'¹ Another great influence in his life was his brother-in-law, Matthew Arnold, and a favourite occupation of his latter years was to read 'Matt's poetry' to the family circle at Burley. From him he acquired a knowledge of educational problems both in the schools of England and in those Continental countries which Arnold visited in order to furnish reports upon their methods to the Education Department. If ever there was a case of God finding his Englishman for a particular task, then certainly there is good ground for suggesting that the selection of Forster to bring about the long-delayed conversion of the Education controversy into a workable compromise bears all the marks of a divine providence at work.

PREPARATORY CONFERENCES

The conference habit which grips so many modern educationists and stimulates them to pass such aggressive resolutions originated in the eighteen-forties, and during the two or three years before Forster introduced his Education Bill every large town in the country was the scene of meetings and counter-meetings propounding various solutions of the education question. In 1866 a 'national conference' assembled in Manchester at which a resolution was passed demanding 'complete provision for the primary instruction of the children of the poorer classes, by means of local rates, under local administration, with legal power, in cases of neglect, to enforce attendance at school.' It met again in 1868, under the joint presidency of W. E. Forster and Bruce (afterwards Lord Aberdare), when its emphasis was again on local control and compulsion. At the same time the

¹ Wemyss Reid: *Life of W. E. Forster*, pp. 270, 271.

Midlands were active under the inspiration of Joseph Chamberlain, then a young and fiery Radical, and organising an Education League they advocated the provision of free schools under local control when lack of schools was proved; the schools were to be built and maintained by rates and taxes and not to teach any religious dogma. As a counterblast to the Manchester and Birmingham plans, a Church Association—the National Education Union—put forward yet another proposal which called for an increase of Government grant so as to enable the voluntary associations to meet the whole demand for elementary education. It was a battle royal on the issue of school government and the place of religion in the school, and it raged in every town and village in the country. Should the Voluntary Bodies alone possess the schools? Should the schools be controlled by a representative Local Body? Should there be local rates? Should doctrinal teaching be taught in subsidised schools? Should it not be Bible teaching only? Or, as some contended, should not schools which relied on public aid limit themselves to secular teaching? Should parents be compelled to send their children to school? Was compulsion of this kind compatible with individual liberty? Forster analysed these conflicting opinions in a detailed memorandum which he submitted to the Cabinet and submitted proposals which subsequently formed the basis of his Bill. He concluded his memorandum by saying that he was convinced that 'in dealing with this education question, boldness is the only safe policy. Any measure which does not profess to be complete will be a certain failure, but we shall have support from all sides if, on the one hand, we acknowledge and make use of present educational efforts, and, on the other hand, admit the duty of the central government to supplement these efforts by means of local agency.'

OPINION IN 1870

Agitation for educational reform, Forster's sound judgment, careful preparation of the Bill, all such were the apparent reasons for its adoption by Parliament. But it would not have succeeded where preceding legislative attempts had failed if there had not been other and deeper causes at work which strengthened the hand of its advocates. There can be no doubt, for example, that the moment was politically favourable for a measure of educational reform. The Liberals had just come back to office after

Disraeli's leap in the dark; they had been returned on the new franchise, and although none of the newly enfranchised working men had entered the House, yet it was generally understood that their clamour for reform must be appeased. Palmerston had gone, and Gladstone reigned in his stead. 'Whenever he gets my place,' Palmerston had said, 'we shall have strange doings.' And, in the words of Professor Trevelyan, 'Gladstone, now close on sixty years, was approaching the climacteric and brief perfection of his political genius.' It was clear to sensible men in both parties that educational reform of some kind was urgently necessary; and it is reasonable to assume that the Conservatives, no less than the Liberals, would, if they had continued in office, have produced an Education Bill, though no doubt on somewhat different lines. Politically therefore there was no question as to the appropriateness of the moment; and Gladstone at his zenith was too great a statesman to let slip a golden opportunity for accomplishing a great reform even if it involved alienating some of his own supporters.

But there were deeper and wider influences at work which facilitated agreement and made compromise seem the better part of controversy. The country was exceedingly prosperous, and Britain had become the greatest power in the world. It could no longer be said of it, as Bolingbroke did when Walpole was supreme, that 'all is little and low and mean among us.' On the contrary there never has been a time in all our history before or since when men so emphatically believed in progress; they regarded the onward march of civilisation as a law of nature. It is true that they applied this gospel especially to material factors, and that it was a consequence of the incredible developments that were taking place in the realm of industry and invention. But pride in their new mills, factories, steam engines and boiler-houses inclined them also to want better schools. Individualism was still a dominant philosophy, but it was tempered by humanitarianism and by a greater readiness to face facts. State regulation had been admitted in factory legislation, and to many it seemed common sense that the State should intervene in education to an extent sufficient to ensure that there was schooling for all. Bentham, it is true, still ranked among the prophets—and incidentally it is interesting to notice that to-day there is a Benthamite revival at least to the extent of admitting the fertility and inventiveness of his political theories; but his principles were

not wholly averse to State control, for though he declared that economic man was actuated by self-interest, he also asserted it to be the duty of the State to secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number. 'Time,' says Sir Ernest Barker, 'was destined to emphasise the second of these principles at the expense of the first.'¹ By 1870 it had begun to do so, and this trend had been accelerated by the development of Mill's political outlook, which during his later years moved steadily away from *laissez-faire*. 'The welcoming of factory legislation, the repudiation of his first theory of the "wage fund," his interest in co-operation, are among the stages in which he passed very far from his first individualism to a conception of very extensive State regulation and control. But however much he wished to control those of man's activities which were proving destructive to each other, his ultimate ideal of personal human freedom, with individual personality as the final thing of value in the universe, remained intact.'² At 1870 his influence was at its height. The Tories were apt to smile at his rather humourless morality, 'a political finishing governess,' Disraeli called him; but the new liberalism was in no doubt as to his prophetic stature and the Elementary Education Act of 1870 reflects the 'individualism' expounded in his essay *On Liberty*, in which he distinguishes between actions affecting the individual only and actions involving others.³ When the action or inaction of an individual, he maintained, was harmful to others, his liberty should be restricted for the general good; and the State therefore was in his view clearly justified in compelling a parent to send his child to school unless he ensured his primary education in some other way. But the emphasis on liberty of conscience is the outstanding theme of his famous Essay; and so while he advocated compulsory education he insisted also that it should be so administered as not to impose upon the child religious teaching at variance with the parents' wishes. The underlying principles of the Forster Act are consonant with this philosophy—its conscience clause, its generally sympathetic attitude to parental choice, and at the same time its acceptance of the principle of compulsion (at first subject to local

¹ Barker: *Political Thought in England, 1848-1904* (H.U.L., edition 1930), p. 205.

² Essay by Sir Arthur Salter on 'J. S. Mill,' *The Great Victorians*, vol. II, (Penguin Books, 1938), p. 322.

³ See J. R. M. Butler: *History of England* (H.U.L.), p. 141; and J. F. Rees: *Social and Industrial History of England* (Methuen), p. 103.

option and in 1876 made universal) all bear the mark of John Stuart Mill's influence.

There were other forces which helped to make a bold measure of educational reform acceptable. The Churches had awoken from their slumber, and mid-Victorian Christianity, if it wielded too vigorously the sword of controversy, was not unmindful of the fact that the Church militant had also a social responsibility. 'England,' says Mr. J. R. M. Butler, 'was a Christian country in the 'sixties in a way she had not been forty years earlier. The Nonconformist bodies had made great progress, and the established Church was served in the country parishes, and even in the industrial districts, by clergymen very different from the curates described by Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë.'¹ The evangelical revival had done good; and leaders of the movement, men of the calibre of Wilberforce and Shaftesbury, had shown that its creed of redemption had humanitarian implications. Kingsley and Maurice were preaching Christian Socialism and Cambridge had come under their spell, while the high churchmen of the Oxford movement were showing that it was possible to combine with their doctrinal and liturgical fervour a genuine concern for submerged humanity. Gladstone was one of the mightiest of them, and this perhaps helped some of them to discover virtues in the educational compromise to which otherwise they might have been blind. Thomas Arnold had restored the ideal of the Christian gentleman, and in incomparable English Newman had defined the gentlemanly virtues in the seventh of his famous discourses *On the Scope and Nature of University Education*. So within the fold of all the Churches were men who in their different ways sought the highest and the best according to their convictions. The hesitations about educational and social reform on the part of the well-to-do minority, however, enable one to realise how strong was the hold of the *laissez-faire* tradition and how deeply entrenched the opinion that ultimately voluntary enterprise would accomplish all that was necessary for the education of the poor. The extreme caution which Forster manifested in presenting his Bill indicates the stage which the public mind had reached. His chief planks were (i) the preservation of voluntarism as far as possible, (ii) the intervention of the State only 'to fill up the gaps' in school provision, (iii) not so much State intervention as local interven-

¹ Butler: *A History of England, 1815-1918* (H.U.L.), p. 136.

tion by School Boards and (iv) local option as to compulsion upon parents. This cautious departure from individualism was counted 'bold,' and even Matthew Arnold, although he agreed that 'William's Bill will do very well,' had grave doubts about applying compulsion to parents. But it was in tune with the spirit of the age, because there was a growing realisation that *laissez-faire*, though it might have much to commend it in the sphere of economics, was unsound as a social philosophy. 'No wonder,' says Arnold Toynbee, 'that against the economists were arrayed philosophers, moralists, even statesmen. All these saw in the doctrine of individualism a solvent of domestic, political and national union—a great disintegrating element of social life. They all saw in the proclamation of the reign of self-interest the universal abolition of feelings of kindness and gratitude, of filial reverence and paternal care, of political fidelity and patriotism—in short, of all the sentiments which welded society into a whole. Christian ministers lamented the decay of domestic ties, the refusal of children to support parents, the neglect of parents to educate children. Moralists deplored the growing alienation of masters and workmen—the harsh self-seeking of the employers, the indolence and hatred of the employed. Statesmen lamented the destruction of national life, the subordination of national welfare to individual gain, the advocacy of measures which might enrich individuals, but must, they thought, disintegrate the empire.'¹ Ruskin's *Unto this Last*, published serially in the *Cornhill Magazine* nine or ten years before Forster framed his Bill, illustrates the new trend of opinion. He outlines a new political creed of which the first clause reads: 'First, that there should be training schools for youth established, at Government cost and under Government discipline, over the whole country; that every child born in the country should, at the parents' wish, be permitted (and, in certain cases, be under penalty required) to pass through them.' Carlyle, echoing the Hegelianism which was beginning to gain ground, puts the case for State intervention in his own emphatic way; denouncing Benthamism, he demanded universal education as one of the rights of man. 'Bentham's theory of man,' he said, 'and of man's life . . . a more beggarly one than Mahomet's.' 'Who would suppose that Education were a thing which had to be advocated on the ground of local expe-

¹ Toynbee: 'Essay on Ricardo and the Old Political Economy,' *Industrial Revolution* (1884), p. 24.

diency, or indeed on any ground? As if it stood not on the basis of everlasting duty, as a prime necessity of man.' 'Every toiling Manchester, its smoke and soot all burnt, ought it not, among so many world-wide conquests, to have a hundred acres or so of free green field, with trees on it, conquered, for its little children to disport in. . . . Nay, this one Bill, which lies yet unenacted, a right Education Bill, is not this of itself the sure parent of innumerable wise Bills?' Carlyle had one advantage over the other prophets; for he was one of Forster's closest friends, and able directly to influence his judgment. 'His words,' said Forster on one occasion, 'not so much by their purport as by their tone and spirit, sounded through me like the blast of a trumpet, stirring up all my powers to the battle of life.'

FORSTER'S BILL

The government of elementary education was, by the terms of Forster's Bill, entrusted to a condominium composed of (a) the State Department, (b) a Local School Board, (c) Voluntary Managers. The main purpose of the Bill was defined as that of 'filling the gaps' in the school provision; and this was to be achieved by the School Boards who were empowered to supplement the school provision made by the Voluntary Managers, and they were authorised to levy a local rate for this object. In the original Bill the School Boards were also permitted to make grants to Voluntary Managers, but this intention was abandoned, an increased State grant being substituted for it. The School Boards were only to be constituted in those districts where they were needed to supplement the voluntary provision or where the electors desired them, and they were to be elected triennially. The cost of the schools provided by the School Boards was to be met out of fees not exceeding 9*d.* a week, Government grant, and local rates; those of the voluntary schools by fees, Government grant and subscriptions. Conscience was safeguarded by a requirement that no attendance at any place of worship or Sunday School nor any religious teaching or observance was to be imposed on any child if his parents or guardians objected. To facilitate this, any religious teaching or observance must be either at the beginning or end of a school session, and any scholar might be withdrawn by his parent without suffering any disadvantage. The school must be open at all times to H.M. Inspector, but he was not to enquire into or examine religious

teaching. The most important amendment introduced into the Bill was that known as the Cowper-Temple Clause, which required that no religious catechism or distinctive formulary was to be taught in a School Board school. This enabled School Boards either to provide what was termed simple Bible teaching in these schools or to provide only secular teaching. The former practice became the rule, and in England only seven School Board districts omitted to provide Bible teaching. On the other hand, forty-three Welsh districts gave secular teaching only, a fact attributable largely to the strength of the Sunday School movement in the Principality and a preference for giving religious teaching by that method. School Boards were permitted by by-law to compel parents to send their children to school, but compulsory attendance was made universal by subsequent Acts in 1876 and 1880.

Introducing the Bill, Forster sought to direct the attention of the House to the realities of the educational position. He paraded the facts. Last year, he said, £415,000 was spent in grants upon 11,000 day schools and 2,000 night schools. But only two-fifths of the children of the working classes between the ages of six and ten are in grant-aided schools, and only one-third of those between ten and twelve. Of those between six and ten we have helped 700,000 more or less, but we have left unhelped 1,000,000; while of those between ten and twelve, we have helped 250,000 and left unhelped at least 500,000. He said that he did not leave out of account Private Schools, but the schools which do not receive Government assistance are generally speaking the worst and those least fitted to provide education. It is calculated, for example, that in Liverpool the number of children who ought to receive an elementary education is 80,000, but as far as we can ascertain 20,000 of these attend no school whatsoever, while at least another 20,000 attend schools where the education is not worth having. He gave the figures of other large towns, and proceeding said that the results of the present system are as you would expect—much imperfect education and much absolute ignorance. Attendance is so irregular that good schools become bad schools for the many who come only on two or three days a week or for a few weeks in the year. 'The result of the State leaving the initiative to volunteers is, that where State help has been most wanted, State help has been least given.' Hence, he concludes, comes a demand from all parts of the country for

'a complete system of national education,' and our aim will therefore be 'to cover the country with good schools, and get the parents to send their children to those schools.' We shall complete the present voluntary system, filling up the gaps, sparing the public money where it can be done without. Our proposal is to leave the Voluntary Schools to enjoy their existing benefits, and only to provide State Schools where subsidised voluntarism has been unequal to the need.

He then explained how he intended to divide the country up into school districts, as to which we have taken the boundaries of the boroughs as regards the towns, and civil parishes in the rural area, with power to unite parishes for this purpose. Some may doubt the fitness of the elected School Boards for this work, but we believe that they will rise to the duties entrusted to them and we do not propose to add ex-officio members or Government nominees. As to finance, we propose to retain the system of charging fees: even with the existing limited number of schools, fees bring in a revenue of £420,000. If we abolished fees, the middle classes would soon be demanding free schools, such as they have in the New England States. But we recognise the claim of poverty, and School Boards will be empowered in special circumstances to establish free schools, and also to meet cases of hardship by free tickets. We hope to keep as nearly as possible to the present proportions of the revenue yield: one-third parents, one-third grant, one-third local funds. As regards local rating, he observed that he was touching 'delicate ground,' but they could not postpone the issue until the general principle of rating has been settled. An education rate would reduce the prison and pauper rate; and it would not be a new rate, but a charge on the poor rate fund. We propose also to authorise School Boards to borrow money with repayment in thirty years so that they can build new schools.

On the subject of compulsion he confessed that the adoption of the principle by the Government might surprise the House. It was a 'startling' proposal, he said, but not quite an innovation, for the principle had been applied in the Short Time Acts, and it was absurd to say that it was 'un-English.' Various alternative methods of administering compulsion had been explored by the Government, and the one which had commended itself to them was the straightforward direct plan of compelling parents of children within certain age limits to send them to school unless

they could furnish the School Boards with a reasonable excuse. We therefore give power to the School Boards to frame by-laws along such lines. Before we pay grant on an Elementary School or recognise it as such, he observed, it must satisfy the old regulation as to secular efficiency, and it must be open to inspection. 'Hitherto the inspection has been denominational; we propose that it should no longer be so.' He then referred to the Conscience Clause, remarking; 'We have no right to interfere with the taxpayer's feelings as a parent, or to oblige him to accept for his children religious education to which he objects.' And in conclusion, he submitted four main reasons for desiring the prompt passage of the Bill: (i) our industrial prosperity depends upon it, (ii) so does the safe working of our Constitution, (iii) so does our competition with other civilised nations, and (iv) 'Do we not know child after child—boys or girls—growing up to probable crime, to still more probable misery, because badly taught or utterly untaught?'

THE DEBATES ON THE BILL

The parliamentary battle raged for some thirty nights, providing *Hansard* with strange copy. Party alignments were obliterated in sectarian warfare, and Liberals and Conservatives fought as one in internecine strife with members of their own parties. Stalwart Government supporters accused Gladstone of forcing the Bill through with the aid of opposition votes; and turning on them he not only admitted but even gloried in the impeachment. 'Prejudice,' he thundered, 'has been attempted to be excited against this Bill, because it has found considerable favour with gentlemen sitting on the opposite side of the House. . . . It is really like reviving the dictum—the happily forgotten dictum—of Mr. Fox. When Mr. Pitt proposed to make a commercial treaty with France, Mr. Fox unfortunately said it was monstrous to propose a commercial treaty with that country, because the French ought to be regarded as our natural enemies.' And Forster, pressed by leading members of his own Party to secularise education, was equally emphatic. 'With my assent,' he wrote to a Quaker friend, 'the State shall not do this, and I believe I can prevent it, though very probably by my own ostracism.' With so many cross-currents of opinion, it is difficult to do justice to the debate by a simple analysis of the issues discussed; but it can not inaptly be described as a triangular contest

in which the Government, the Education League and the National Education Union are the main contending forces. The Government seeking peace by compromise and concession, the League pressing for unsectarian teaching and the Union fighting the battle of Voluntaryism and Anglicanism—all deeply in earnest and convinced of the righteousness of their cause. Religious teaching, compulsory attendance and the proposed School Boards constituted the principal issues; and it is instructive now to look back and note the hopes and fears which they aroused.

The 'Religious Difficulty' as it was called was the main source of controversy, and it had several aspects. One which created considerable strife concerned the powers to be entrusted to School Boards over the character of the religious teaching to be given in the Board Schools. The Bill, as presented, put them in much the same position as it did the Managers of the Voluntary Schools; they were given the right to decide what the religious teaching should be. Some declared that such wide powers would lead to so much local bitterness that before long there would come despair and finally as a way-out a demand for secular teaching. Others said it was merely transferring a national issue from Westminster to the localities, and in that sense multiplying and magnifying it. In many instances, it was argued, a bare majority on a School Board would be able to impose its religious preference on a large minority, and at election times there would be outbursts of religious acrimony that would be a disgrace to the country. 'I suppose,' said Vernon Harcourt, referring to the election methods likely to be adopted, 'there will be religious public-houses opened in every street; the blue and yellow placards will invite voters to support "Jones and the Thirty-Nine Articles" or "Smith and No Creed." The Mayor of Oxford had declared that if the Bill passed, within six weeks he and his colleagues would be cutting each other's throats.' Dilke, another eminent Liberal, argued that while it might be proper to leave this matter to local discussion in the towns, it would be most unfair to leave the rural parishes a free hand in the matter; in the villages, said another member, 'the religious teaching would take the colour of the dominant sect of the district, usually that of the squire and the parson.' Forster replied to such arguments by saying that if the decision was not left to the School Boards, Parliament would have to arrive at a hard and fast

decision as to what form the religious teaching in Board Schools should assume or alternatively order that none should be given. He referred to Holland, where the Dutch, owing to their inability to agree on this question, had finally decided to leave all denominational schools out in the cold; and he quoted King Edward's School, Birmingham, as an example of a school with a religious syllabus which satisfied all parents. The syllabus, he said, was wholly acceptable to such eminent Nonconformist divines as the Rev. C. Vince and the Rev. R. W. Dale, and yet the school had produced such great Anglican contemporaries as Lightfoot, Westcott and Benson. He was supported by Cowper-Temple, who expressed the view that if ever there was a matter on which the inhabitants of a district might be left to decide it was this question of the character of the religious teaching to be given in the schools.

A penetrating expression of opinion came from Lord Robert Montagu, a Conservative, who contended that a national settlement of this question might if wisely framed ensure more variety than a chain of local settlements; and in his view variety was important from the standpoint of national character. Under the Bill, as proposed, a Local Authority would decide the nature of the religious teaching in all the Board Schools in its area, and if it did so, one could be fairly sure that the arrangements would be on a uniform plan. Thus, he declared, there would be one form of religious teaching in all the Board Schools of Birmingham, notwithstanding the variety of beliefs there. He rejected also the plea of those who wanted the Elementary Schools to confine their attention to secular teaching, leaving it to the Sunday Schools to provide the religious teaching. He reminded the House that the Newcastle Commission had described Sunday Schools as 'penal servitude' and quoted the Dean of Carlisle as attributing irreligious tendencies to 'the injudicious amount and quality of the whole Sabbath Day instruction.'¹ Gradually the House concentrated upon a proposal to restrict the alternatives open to the School Board, while at the same time giving them authority over religious teaching in their schools. The question narrowed down finally to one of deciding whether the School Boards should be authorised to sanction only the reading of 'portions' of the Bible or some wider teaching from Holy Writ. It was argued that it

¹ See p. 66 of *Verbatim Report of the Debate of the Elementary Education Bill, 1870*, published at the time by the National Education Union.

was useless to seek peace by confining religious teaching in Board Schools to reading of the Bible; children always asked awkward questions, and what then? On the other hand, it was said that if exposition was allowed, sectarian differences of interpretation would be inevitable. The general sense of the House was perhaps best expressed by Cowper-Temple when he observed that 'to allow the Bible to be read without explanation would be unfair and cruel to the children,' and he it was who moved as an amendment the famous clause which settled the issue and still remains law, which prescribes that 'no religious catechism or religious formulary distinctive of any denomination' is to be taught in any Board School.

Another aspect of the religious 'difficulty' concerned finance; should the proceeds of a local rate be used to pay for the teaching of religion? When it had been decided that Voluntary Schools should not be assisted out of the local rate fund, controversy arose as to whether it was proper that this fund should be available for Board Schools either, if religious teaching of any kind was to be permitted in them. Members who were not in favour of any religious teaching in Board Schools developed the argument that it was just as wrong for local money to be spent on undenominational as on denominational religious teaching. All rate-aided schools, they declared, should be non-sectarian, because otherwise the minority would be compelled to pay for the kind of religious teaching preferred by the majority. Harcourt argued forcibly that to use rates to subsidise religious teaching of any kind would be a denial of the great Liberal principle of religious equality; 'It is like saying to a minority,' he observed, 'we have made you pay for a dinner consisting of materials which you cannot consume, but if you wish it we will be so gracious and liberal as to allow you not to eat it.' Henry Richards, a great leader of Welsh Nonconformity, strongly supported him; but eventually Forster overcame this secularist opposition in a speech which closed with a characteristic peroration, saying: 'And yet I believe that when the objectors come to reflect, they will not regret that we have not by Act of Parliament built a wall around the schools which are to receive the outcast and destitute, through which a ray of Christian light could not penetrate, and that in the interests of freedom we did not get Parliament to declare that parents who desire for their children religious combined with secular instruction should not be allowed to have their wishes gratified.'

The most interesting religious issue was, however, that about the Conscience Clause: should there be such a clause, and if so, should it operate only at a fixed period of the daily time-table? As drafted, the Bill proposed a Conscience Clause, but said nothing about the place in the time-table when religious teaching should be given. On the general question as to whether there should be a Conscience Clause, it was argued that such a clause would foster sectarian habits in childhood; pupils would split themselves into Bible and non-Bible factions, and, said one honourable member, pelt each other with stones in the playground. It was also contended that such a clause would be ineffective: 'The poor were frequently unable to avail themselves of its protection, because the influence of their superiors in social position was too strong to be resisted.' Members were also reminded that in thousands of small schools there was only one room, and 'where were the children to go while the religious teaching was being conducted?' Henry Richards spoke eloquently of his anxieties for Nonconformist children in the small parochial Church schools of Wales. 'The Conscience Clause,' he protested, 'is no protection for the poor man'; yet it is the overwhelming majority who have to rely upon it as a safeguard 'against the ascendancy and intolerance of a very small minority.' Harcourt went so far as to say that 'of all methods of dealing with this religious difficulty that of the Conscience Clause seems to me the least religious.' Much was said from the opposite standpoint, but the general impression which the debate leaves on one's mind is the hopelessness of finding a satisfactory answer to 'the religious difficulty'; nobody seems to like Conscience Clauses, but no one can find an acceptable alternative. Gradually therefore the realists concentrate upon making the Clause as effective and as little invidious as possible. Cowper-Temple leads the way. At the close of the second reading, he observes that 'an improvement might be made in the Bill by inserting a provision requiring the distinctive religious instruction to be given at the beginning or end of the lessons.' Closing this stage of the debate, Gladstone commends this suggestion; in drawing up the Clause, he says, the Government proceeded with great care. 'Yet,' he continues, 'I cannot but admit that it appears to me, for many reasons, that great advantage will attend the adoption of such a change in the Bill.' So when the committee stage is reached, we find Gladstone proposing to incorporate

Cowper-Temple's time-table clause, and Disraeli, delighted to have a shot at him, declaring such a change of mind at so late a stage 'a most extraordinary course for a great Minister and the leader of the House to take and one indicative of vacillation of purpose.'

There is of course much argument for and against the amendment: a large number of teachers in South Wales are said to have been circularised and to have pronounced it impracticable, while it is said that two thousand teachers, though not objecting to a time-table clause, have united in objecting to the limitations it will impose upon the discretion of managers as to when religion may be taught. It is pleaded that fixation of hours will often prevent the teaching from being the best possible, and it will make it difficult for the clergyman or the schoolmaster to give the religious teaching, and compel them owing to other demands on the stated periods to hand over this grave responsibility to monitors or pupil teachers. No one, however, seems to have developed the most obvious objection, namely, that if religion is a spirit it is difficult to imprison it by means of a time-table. Through all the arguments, good and bad, the Government stood firm, and eventually the time-table clause was carried: Ayes 222, Noes 122, Majority 100.

The principle of compulsory attendance also aroused acrimonious discussion, but bearing in mind its far-reaching significance, the political philosophy of the period and the comparative novelty of the proposal, agreement to accept it on a by-law basis came more easily than one might have expected. It was argued against it that 'it would be found very hard and oppressive on the labourer,' that 'a widow often depended upon the work of her boys,' and it was even characterised as 'a press-gang system'; and it was alleged that to enforce it an 'army of inspectors' would be required. On the other hand, some members, Fawcett in particular, were disappointed to find that the compulsion was to be optional; it was wrong, surely, they said, to compel a parent in Birmingham and not to do so in Manchester and Liverpool, for, if it was desirable to protect childhood in one locality, it was equally desirable everywhere. Hundreds of thousands of children, declared Fawcett, had been prevented from receiving the rudiments of education because of the indifference, selfishness or avarice of their parents. Others pointed out that if attendance was not compulsory, there would be a great

waste of money, for accommodation would be provided and not occupied. 'In Lowell, in the State of Massachusetts,' observed Mundella, '97 per cent. of the children attended school, because the school commissioners enforced attendance; while in the City of Fall River, in the same State, only 50 per cent. of the children attended, because the School Board neglected their duty.' Declaring that in Germany every child attended school, he contended that a similar degree of compulsion should obtain in England. 'What,' he said, 'would be the state of education in England if the question of compulsory attendance were left to the discretion of local boards? Would the squire and the farmer favour compulsion when they knew it would raise the rate of wages?' It was urged, too, that Forster's contention that his Bill would reduce the cost of pauperism and of crime lost half its force if neglected children were not everywhere to be compelled to attend school. Gladstone dealt with these conflicting arguments, saying in the course of a long speech that he deeply regretted the necessity 'in the midst of our advanced civilization' for some measure of compulsion, and in the end the principle of compulsory attendance, subject to local option, was accepted.

The other important issue, the creation of a Local Authority—School Board—was also made an occasion for controversy. Some feared that their sole objective would be 'that of grinding down the expense.' Others said that in the smaller electoral areas especially the personnel of the School Boards would be such that it was unfair to place teachers in subjection to them. 'An educated teacher,' said Lord Robert Montagu, 'did not like to submit himself in his art to persons who were less educated than he was.' Some apprehension was expressed also about 'the spirit of love of power, the spirit of unbounded self-love, or the spirit of religious discord' which some representatives might be expected to display, while Fawcett and others who favoured compulsion objected strongly to the delegation of powers—e.g. by-laws—to the School Boards, contending that they would not be capable of dealing with permissive legislation. Anxiety was also expressed as to the excessive influence that the squire might exercise in rural School Boards, and Gladstone agreed that it was important to secure that 'the principle of property shall not too much dominate over the principle of personal representation, which has so direct a bearing on the subject of education.' Many were worried about rates. Some feared that 'under the Bill there

would be resort to rates to save subscriptions'; rating, it was said, would kill private generosity. Some foresaw that small school areas would prove costly, and urged that they should receive more generous treatment than the rest, while one member expressed the hope that there would be ultimately a 50 per cent. Government grant. Forster reassured members who feared that rates would soar by declaring that he was satisfied that a 3*d.* rate would be rarely exceeded. But of course the strongest opposition to local rating came from members who resented public expenditure on schools in which there was to be doctrinal teaching, and the objection, as has been noted, was met by confining the application of the rates to the Board Schools and authorising a higher Government grant to Voluntary Schools.

The last stage in this parliamentary drama was not reached until August, on the eve of the summer recess, after five weary months of thrust and counter-thrust. The Commons met to receive the Lords' amendments, of which the most important, oddly enough having regard to the aristocratic complexion of the Upper House, was one which ensured that election to School Boards would be by ballot and not via Town Council or vestry. For a moment, perhaps encouraged by the prospect of adjournment, the Commons was light-hearted in its heavy Victorian way. Harcourt, perhaps the most truculent of the Bill's adversaries, said he wished to speak only 'in perfect good humour' and concluded his observations on the Bill in general with the words which Scott employs to close *Rob Roy*: 'There are in this Bill,' said Harcourt, 'many things owre bad for blessing, and owre gude for banning.' Mundella, who ten years later was responsible for the brief Education Act which made compulsory attendance of universal instead of local application, followed with a tribute to W. E. Forster, declaring that he did not believe any man in England would have carried the difficult task through so well; and he concluded by saying that as Harcourt had quoted prose about the Bill, he would go one better and quote poetry about the Minister responsible for it and describe him in the words of Tennyson as—

'One still strong man in a blatant land
Who can act, and dare not lie.'

A member protested against an amendment about so important a matter as the ballot 'being treated in a humorous manner,' but

the House rose without further comment, and for the moment its appetite for controversy seemed to be fully appeased. Forster had accomplished a great work. 'England had obtained, better late than never, a system of education, without which she must soon have fallen to the rear among modern nations. A school had been placed within the reach of every child, at a very low charge, and the local authority might, if it wished, make attendance compulsory. Between 1870 and 1890 the average school attendance rose from one and a quarter millions to four and a half millions, while the cost per child was doubled. In 1880 primary education was made compulsory for all, and in 1891 it was offered free of all expense.'¹ More than any other educational enactment Forster's Act has set the pattern for the administration of education in England and Wales; and it seems reasonable to claim that this inconsistent measure represents on a number of fundamental issues the English mind as to the way education should be managed. Somewhat reluctantly it admits the principle of compulsion; it recognises, however, that parents have rights as well as obligations; it accepts voluntarism and it upholds religious liberty; it operates through local authorities, but upon the apex of its conglomerate edifice it sets the State in the form of an Education Department, exercising powers of supervision with finance as its principal weapon. By 1891, after the English fashion, the nation, on the basis of Forster's Act, had arrived 'between the fell incensed points of mighty opposites' at a system of Elementary Education which was national, compulsory and free.

But contemporary opinion was by no means so favourable. The Church was not pleased, and the Nonconformists were angry. The Liberals lost seat after seat in by-elections, and in 1874 Disraeli became Prime Minister for the second time and held office for six momentous years. 'Gladstone,' says Professor Trevelyan, 'performed his various tasks as national legislator without too nicely considering the electoral consequences.' It was in protest against the concessions to voluntarism in Forster's Act that Joseph Chamberlain, a Unitarian, emerged into prominence as a national leader of Radicalism, and sought to secure Forster's political downfall. His Education Act, he declared, 'had thrown the education of the children of this country into the

¹ Trevelyan: *British History in the Nineteenth Century* (Longmans, 1922), p. 354.

hands of two great ecclesiastical organisations, which had unfortunately been foremost in obstructing the prosperity and advancement of the nation. . . . The object of the Liberal Party in England, throughout the continent of Europe and in America, had been to wrest the education of the young out of the hands of the priests, to whatever denomination they might belong. It would be the crowning triumph of what was called Mr. Forster's statesmanship that he had delayed this admirable consummation for perhaps another generation.' But Forster's compromise has stood the test of time, and the triple alliance of State, Local Authority and Voluntaryism which he forged into a national system has been reaffirmed and reinvigorated by the Education Act of 1944.

CHAPTER V

THE COMPROMISE EXTENDED TO HIGHER EDUCATION

'... you'll find man's thought will flourish in spite of you. It's not like the tulips in the garden there, that you can plant out in beds all at regular intervals.' (*R. A. Knox in 'Let Dons Delight.'*)

THE UNIVERSITIES

Commissions and Departmental or similar Committees are sometimes regarded contemptuously as devices employed by hesitant politicians to postpone the hour of decision. Education, however, has been well served by them, and they have often been the means of crystallising opinion and preparing the way for well-considered reforms. The Hadow Report, for example, has probably been the most constructive educational publication in this country in the present century, and the Spens Report, issued shortly before the war, is full of distilled wisdom which, whether its recommendations are implemented or not, is bound to influence the development of secondary education. The Victorians delighted in enquiries of this kind, and they made great use of them in the field of higher education as a method of discovering abuses and adumbrating policies of reform. In the 'fifties the two ancient Universities were each the subject of such an investigation, which was followed in the 'seventies by a Commission which enquired into their property and income. Acts of Parliament came speedily after each of these enquiries, and reforms were carried out over a period of thirty years which were far-reaching in character. In spite of furious opposition, the principle of State interference was admitted as a consequence of the earliest investigation: 'The turning-point in this first crisis was the Oxford Act of 1854, passed by the Whig-Peelite Government, by the help of Gladstone's local knowledge, energy and mastery of the art of legislation.'¹ The next important phase concerned the Universities Tests Act of 1871, which made the teaching posts of the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and Durham, except certain Divinity Professorships, open irrespec-

¹ Trevelyan: *British History in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 356.

tive of creed, and made the Universities available to men students without a religious test and threw all degrees, other than divinity degrees, open without religious qualification. The third phase, 1877-82, provided the Universities with new statutes, and other legislation which, while developing and consolidating the college system, gave these Universities new resources and prestige. 'A Royal Commission had been appointed, furnished with very wide powers, to revise the constitution of the colleges and the University and to make new statutes. To make possible the foundation of new chairs, the colleges had been obliged to contribute, in proportion to their wealth, to the funds of the University. Their finances had been inspected and set in order. The conditions of entrance had been rendered uniform. And though to the majority of college fellowships active duties of teaching or administration were attached, a certain number of temporary fellowships were retained, sinecures which provided their holders with the necessary leisure for disinterested research. Steps had been taken to break down the barriers which divided the colleges, to make it possible for undergraduates to attend lectures outside their own college and thus to lay the foundation of a division of labour between the colleges.'¹ As far back as 1836 University College and King's College had been united in the University of London, and it was London which in 1878 made University history by first admitting women to degrees on the same terms as men. 'In the last twenty years of the century, when new Universities were being founded up and down the country in the great industrial centres, it was not Oxford and Cambridge,' says Professor Trevelyan, 'that served as a model, but London, with its non-residential colleges and degrees for women.'² As a result of these developments the Universities became, not only the sanctuaries of ancient learning, but also centres of modern studies and scientific thought. 'The position,' says Halévy, 'had changed indeed since those early days of the century when pioneers of modern chemistry and physics were self-educated men outside the official centres of learning. To-day all the leaders of science are University professors, savants duly provided with the official diploma.'³ The Universities had also for good or ill

¹ Halévy: *History of the English People*, Epilogue (1895-1905, Book 2), (Penguin), pp. 21, 22.

² Trevelyan: *British History in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 224.

³ Halévy: *History of the English People*, Epilogue (Book 2), p. 24.

become, through the delegacies which they established, the examining bodies for the higher forms of Secondary Schools, and through their extra-mural departments they advanced effectively into the field of adult education.

The constitutional history of the new Universities deserves the attention of anyone who may happen to be thinking about the future government of education. Our tendency is to relate the University regime wholly to the past, and to note how in various features it harks back to mediæval tradition, but the new Universities were not only heirs to an ancient inheritance, but also modern products of wholly unprecedented circumstances created by the Industrial Revolution and a response to an entirely new demand for University education. To borrow Forster's phrase about elementary education, it had become necessary to fill up also this particular 'gap' in our national life. At first there was some doubt as to the nature of the gap and a tendency to think of it in terms of the applied sciences; but presently a more generous conception of the need prevailed. The Yorkshire School of Science, for example, opened in 1874 as a technological institution, but it added, three years later, English and History to its programme of studies and henceforward gradually developed an Arts side. Mason College, founded in Birmingham in 1870 'to promote thorough systematic education and instruction adapted to . . . the requirements of the manufactures and industrial pursuits of the Midland District,' grew rapidly with Queen's College in the same city into a proud University. Federation characterises the earlier stages of some of the new Universities, but not so much from a belief in federation as for reasons of economy and staffing when students are comparatively few. One need not therefore attach much constitutional importance to the federal phase, but there is a good deal to learn from the way in which the Universities solved those same questions which for elementary education were settled by the compromise of 1870, and it is interesting to recall that behind the University movement were many of the chief figures of the Elementary School drama; e.g. Gladstone active in all University reform, W. E. Forster foremost in the conversion of the Yorkshire School of Science into the University of Leeds, and Joseph Chamberlain the most ardent spirit in the creation and planning of the University of Birmingham.

As in the case of the Elementary Schools, it was necessary, in

deciding the constitution of the Universities, to settle their relationship with the State, to solve the religious difficulty and to determine whether rates and taxes should contribute to their finances. As regards the State, it has already been noted that Parliament intervened to facilitate by legislation the reform of the older Universities, and it also assisted the new Universities to solve their constitutional problems. In the case of Owens College, Manchester, for example, the State intervened not once but on several occasions, helping in a paternal sort of way the young institution to grow up and attain its appropriate University status. In 1870 and 1871 Parliament passed two separate enactments securing its incorporation. Ten years later the College had thoughts of becoming a University, and obtained a Royal Charter entitling it the Victoria University. Then Leeds and Liverpool joined it in a grand federal scheme; and all three became constituents of Victoria, a title which it is said W. E. Forster loyally suggested. Then there came doubts about the wisdom of federalism, and a Committee of the Privy Council debated the issues involved. 'It seems rather complicated,' said the Duke of Devonshire, 'rather like the Athanasian Creed.' So each of the three Colleges became Universities, and Owens, by an Act of Parliament, was in 1904 'incorporated' as the Victoria University of Manchester.

In Wales Parliament took quite a different line. Three colleges had been accorded Royal Charters—Cardiff (1884), Bangor (1885) and Aberystwith (1890, but actually founded in 1872); and almost simultaneously there was a national urge towards federation. In 1888 the Cymmrodorion Society passed a resolution in support of 'a university organisation' for Wales and Monmouthshire and soon afterwards arranged a conference with Welsh peers and Members of Parliament in order to secure the sympathy of Parliament. In spite of some opposition in the House of Lords by friends of the old Anglican College at Lampeter, Parliament in 1893 agreed to the draft charter which constituted a University comprising the three colleges of Bangor, Aberystwith and Cardiff. Swansea has since been added in accordance with the terms of the Charter, in which rights were reserved to the Crown by supplemental Charter to increase the number of constituent colleges. The establishment of a Welsh University realised a dream as old as the great Owen Glyndwr and gave shape to a project that had been discussed by Oliver

Cromwell and leading Welshmen of that period. In the North of England, local circumstances rendered federation an inconvenient form of University government, and Parliament put an end to it; in Wales, on the other hand, it harmonised with the national and time-honoured aspirations of the Welsh people, and it continues as a successful form of University government with the full approval of the State. State intervention in University affairs shows throughout this regard for local opinion; and apart from such political upheavals as the Civil War, the attitude of the State has, generally speaking, been one of paternal benevolence, interfering only when asked to do so by the College or University concerned, or, as in the case of the Oxford and Cambridge Acts, in order to facilitate very necessary reforms. The State trusts the Universities to exercise their autonomy wisely, and in its relations with them observes Lord Falkland's dictum: 'When it is not necessary to change, it is necessary not to change.'

The solution of the religious difficulty is epitomised in the Universities Tests Act of 1871; the principle which it formulates for the older Universities finds expression in the Charters of the new Universities, which stipulate that teaching appointments and admission to the University shall be free from all religious prescription. In the older Universities the cake of custom has shown a remarkable durability. It was only about three years ago that for the first time a non-Anglican was appointed to a Chair of Theology in their venerable precincts, while 1941 can find a place in ecclesiastical history as providing the first occasion upon which a Nonconformist preached the University sermon at Cambridge. C. P. Scott, the great editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, used to relate how in 1865 because of his Unitarian faith he was refused admission to two Oxford Colleges.¹

The finance of the new colleges began on a voluntary basis, and their history opens with an entirely philanthropic phase. This early reliance upon the pious benefactor—an Owens, a Mason or a Holloway—is, however, short-lived; for the growing University quickly discovers that philanthropy is not enough; and taxes, then local rates, come to the rescue as they did in the case of the Elementary School. In 1889 the House of Commons

¹ For modern views about religion in Universities see Adolf Lowe's *The Universities in Transformation* (Sheldon Press), David Paton's *Blind Guides* (S.C.M. Press), and Alec R. Vidler's *Secular Despair and Christian Faith*, especially chapter v, called 'The University, Chaos or Community' (S.C.M. Press, 1941).

decided to distribute £15,000 as University grants and at the beginning of the nineteenth century, after a report upon the work and the necessities of the new institutions, the sum was increased to £25,000. At the beginning of the present century Local Authorities joined with the State in subsidising the Universities; but their main source of income at that period was still private generosity and public funds were looked upon only as supplementary sources of revenue. The University of Birmingham, for example, relied principally on an endowment fund of £420,000; and its additional resources were a State grant of £2,000 and an income from local funds of £7,000 a year, of which £5,500 came from a half-penny rate levied by the Birmingham municipality. Benefactions come along less freely in these latter days, and modern Universities have to rely more on the aid which they receive from the State and the grants annually made to them by Local Authorities. This growing reliance of the new Universities upon public funds has, however, not impaired their autonomy: they are governed by Courts, Councils, Senates and Convocations as prescribed in their own Charters, and the only part which the State as a matter of course plays in their affairs consists in a periodical visitation by a University Grants Committee to ascertain needs and to report as to whether the taxpayer's money is being usefully spent. As for the Local Authorities, they have as a rule representatives on Court and Council, but usually they ask nothing more of the Universities than that they shall be worthy of their confidence. Justice cannot be done to the subject of University government in a brief and superficial reference such as this. It is, however, a subject which will repay study by anyone exploring the possible future of school management, for it contains democratic and corporate elements which, as the next chapter suggests, might be usefully translated to other spheres of educational activity.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The State did not intervene effectively in the sphere of secondary education until 1902, and this delay was due largely to the opposition of those who did not want the Grammar Schools to suffer any loss of independence. There are still many friends of these schools who sincerely believe that State intervention inevitably restricts liberty and promotes a monotonous uniformity. The history of the Grammar School does not, however, bear out

this contention. It shows, on the contrary, that throughout their long story they had precious little liberty to lose and that for centuries they had been sore let and hindered by numerous restrictions, definite and indefinite. Their trust deeds, as the Spens Report reminds us, had been a veritable brake upon their progress; and school historians show that the venerable benefactor not infrequently had a nuisance value, so often did the conditions that he imposed hinder development.¹ Ecclesiastical control, which influenced staffing, curriculum and text-books, was often arbitrary and unsympathetic; and it tended to produce a similarity of time-table and syllabus. Tradition also had a deadening influence: it came to be understood that Grammar Schools should, to use Dr. Johnson's phrase, confine their attention, apart from religion to 'the learned languages taught grammatically.' So it came about that in the year of Trafalgar, Lord Eldon ruled, in an application from the Governors of Leeds Grammar School, that by its very nature the school was prohibited from teaching modern studies. Enough, however, has been said to indicate that the Grammar Schools were suffering from a good many restrictions when the State began to intervene, and it is not difficult to show that the action of the State, from the first day of intervention onwards, has been much more that of a liberator than a tyrant.²

Emancipation came at first through the medium of private Bills: for example, the Macclesfield foundation was thus enabled to open a Modern School which flourished at the gates of the more exclusive Grammar School until they merged to their mutual benefit in 1911. The first national statute of importance was the Grammar Schools Act of 1840 which dealt specifically with Lord Eldon's judgment, and enabled enterprising Governors to go to the Court of Chancery and secure an enlargement of the curriculum. Twenty-four years later the Taunton Commission began its labours, and in 1868 produced a voluminous report which, in addition to being a constructive document of considerable importance, is a mine of information upon the subject of secondary education in Victorian England. Its immediate consequence was the Endowed Schools Act of 1869 which led to the establishment of Endowment or Charity Com-

¹ *Report of the Consultative Committee on Secondary Education* (Spens Report), p. 16.

² See Archer: *Secondary Education in the XIXth Century*, chap. vi.

missioners whose powers are now exercised by the Board of Education. This freed the Grammar Schools from the 'dead hand' of obsolescent trust deeds, and enabled them to secure 'Schemes' or Instruments of Government by a fairly easy process; and by setting up a Scheme-making body it secured for the Grammar Schools the advantage of the advice of people constantly dealing with the problem of Secondary School endowments. Thus the Schemes, as a result of this co-ordinating influence, tended to uniformity, but it was a uniformity created by the similarity of advice and not by the exercise of mandatory powers. The Spens Report criticises the Taunton Commissioners for urging the grading of Secondary Schools, and attributes this to snobbish motives. Is this quite a fair criticism? No one had more to do with this proposal than T. H. Green in his capacity of Assistant Commissioner, and in conjunction with R. W. Dale he applied the recommendation to the various Birmingham Grammar Schools. Class consciousness was not an attribute of either of these great men, and one can reasonably assume that they were actuated by educational and not social motives. It is interesting to notice as evidence of an awakening conscience about girls' education that Section 12 of the Endowed Schools Act of 1869 enabled girls to have some share in endowments restricted previously to promoting the education of boys.

The educational classification of post-primary education has had an interesting subsequent history, and it is likely to occupy still more attention in the years immediately before us. Few, however, followed the advice of the Taunton Commission on this point, nor did Parliament, until about thirty years had passed, adopt its principal recommendation, which was that central and local authorities for secondary education should be established, with powers to provide rate-aid for existing schools and for the foundation of new schools. Indeed, it required yet another Royal Commission to bring this proposal into the sphere of practical politics, and it had the advantage of being presided over by one who was not less distinguished as a scholar than as a man of affairs, namely, James Bryce. The Bryce Commission, which reported in 1895, led to the establishment of one central authority for education, namely, the Board of Education, and it provided the basis for the famous Education Act of 1902 which established Local Education Authorities throughout England and Wales, empowered to aid education other than elementary. This

Act is the Higher Education counterpart of the Forster Act, on which our national system of elementary education is based, and it was scarcely less successful than its predecessor in provoking bitter religious controversy during its passage through Parliament. Arthur Balfour, who succeeded Lord Salisbury as Prime Minister in 1902, decided to handle the measure himself, and it was largely due to his adroitness and deft steering that it reached the statute book. Like the Forster Act, it produced violent reverberations in the constituencies, and wrought serious political damage to the Government which sponsored it. 'I told you,' wrote Chamberlain to the Duke of Devonshire, 'that your Education Bill would destroy your own party. It has done so.'

It may well be asked why it was after all these years of delay that Parliament decided to intervene in the sphere of higher education. There were of course many factors, and not least among them a growing feeling that we were suffering for our neglect of higher education and that Germany, France and the U.S.A. were much ahead of us educationally. But the main reason for the decision probably is to be found in the change which had been imperceptibly taking place in our political outlook. There was a new school of thought which, drawing its inspiration from Kant and Hegel and ultimately from the Greek ideas about the city-state, believed strongly in State intervention; and its influence was at work in all quarters of public life. 'It matters little,' says Sir Ernest Barker, 'that one party has espoused the cause of protection, and the other the cause of social reform. Both parties are "interventionists" in domestic, as both parties, in a greater or less degree, are interventionists in foreign policy.'¹ It has been contended that types of thought have a way of 'catching on' in congenial places and at appropriate moments; e.g. Rousseauism, as interpreted by Jefferson, in America after the Declaration of Independence, or Darwinism in Hohenzollern Germany as a basis for imperial evolution.² Hegel's idea of organic unity and his *étatisme*, as interpreted and expanded by thinkers like Green and Bosanquet, found a natural response among people weary of *laissez-faire* and eager to bring some orderly progress into the chaotic society created by the Industrial Revolution. How general was the acceptance of the view that State intervention in higher education was necessary is

¹ Barker: *Political Thought in England, 1848-1914* (H.U.L.), pp. 22, 23.

² Graham Wallas: *Art of Thought* (Cape), p. 172.

illustrated by the hesitation which historians have in deciding the paternity of the Education Act of 1902: it had advocates among men of every shade of opinion. Some give a good deal of the credit to a Local Government Auditor, a Mr. Cockerton, who found a niche for himself in our educational history by ruling that a School Board could not aid higher education; the Cockerton Judgment, when upheld by the Court of Appeal in 1901, certainly made it clear beyond doubt that secondary education could only be provided on a popular basis if Parliament faced the issue and passed the necessary legislation. About the same time as the Cockerton decision the Fabian Society published a deadly little tract—*The Education Muddle and the Way Out*—and there is good reason to believe that it had a considerable influence in political circles. It asked for 'a national minimum' of education for all, and it advocated the abolition of the School Boards and the transference of their powers to the County Councils created by the Local Government Act of 1888. It further proposed that the County Councils should be made Local Authorities for Higher Education, as had already been done in Wales by the Welsh Intermediate Education Act. This Fabian tract and the influence of Sidney Webb had much to do with the shaping of the Education Act, 1902, as had also the Permanent Secretary of the Board of Education at that time, Sir Robert Morant, a great Civil Servant and the embodiment of that gospel of efficiency so dear to the neo-Hegelians.

For the acceptance of the Bill by Parliament the Prime Minister, Arthur Balfour, is entitled to most of the credit: it would never have become law if he had not taken charge of it personally and handled it with consummate adroitness. He had to contend with opposition within the Government as well as in both of the Parliamentary parties. The Duke of Devonshire, President of the Board of Education, was at loggerheads with his tactless, if brilliant, Parliamentary Secretary, Sir John Gorst. 'Gorst sees no difficulties,' said Balfour, 'and the Duke sees nothing else.' But the most serious opposition came from his illustrious colleague, Joseph Chamberlain, who as a Nonconformist appears to have disliked the Bill quite as much as he did Forster's Bill thirty-two years before. The debates on the Bill began on June 2nd, 1902, the day on which the peace which ended the Boer War was concluded, and they continued spasmodically until December 18th, when the Act was finally agreed.

The Balfour Act accomplished two revolutionary changes: it established the County Councils and County Borough Councils as Local Education Authorities in place of the School Boards, and to allay local opposition it assigned powers over elementary education to Borough Councils in areas with a minimum population of 10,000 and Urban District Councils in areas with a population of not less than 20,000. The Councils were obliged to set up Education Committees to administer the Education Acts, consisting of members of the Council and a proportion of co-opted members selected because of their interest in education. It was required that every Education Committee should include women members. Except in the Part III areas, as they have come to be called, all Local Authorities had a responsibility for all branches of education, which thus in a sense became a unified service or, as the current political philosophy would have said, 'an organic unity.' This unification of administration seemed to many, especially those influenced by Fabian teaching, the principal achievement of the Balfour Act. 'This,' said Sidney Webb, 'renders the Bill of 1902 epoch-making in the history of English education.'¹ The other notable accomplishment of this Act was that both maintained and voluntary Elementary Schools were placed under the general control of the new Local Education Authorities. The main differences between them now lie in different methods of appointing Managers, in the fact that denominational religious teaching may be given in Voluntary Schools, subject to the conscience clause, and in the responsibility of the trustees of the Voluntary Schools for structural repairs and improvements. Thus the maintenance of the Voluntary Schools became as much a rate charge as did the maintenance of the Council (former Board) Schools; this was welcomed by the Anglicans and the Roman Catholics, but resisted by the majority of Nonconformists. 'Government,' says Sir Graham Balfour, writing just after the passing of the Act, 'apparently in response rather to ecclesiastical pressure than to the united enthusiasm of the Cabinet for education, introduced a Bill of twenty clauses which met with much criticism, both intelligent and blind, raised the bitterest hostility of the Nonconformists and Radicals, was discussed for fifty-nine sittings in two sessions

¹ Quoted by Halévy: *History of the English People*, Epilogue (Book 2) (Penguin), p. 117, which see for an excellent account of the historical background of the Balfour Act.

of the House of Commons, and after the guillotine application of the closure finally became law.¹ During the debates the Anglican members had a little controversy of their own: the evangelicals fearing that the High Church Party would sometimes introduce High Church practices into Voluntary Schools built out of evangelical funds. The Kenyon Slaney Clause, as it was named after its author, was therefore carried to ensure that in a Voluntary School religious teaching shall be given in accordance with the provisions (if any) of the school's trust-deeds.

Reading the contemporary newspapers, you would surmise that the one issue of importance in the Balfour Act was the decision to aid Voluntary Schools with rate money. Opponents of the measure attacked it bitterly as 'a fresh endowment of the Church,' and Mr. Lloyd George spoke of it as 'riveting the clerical yoke on thousands of parishes.' Many Nonconformist leaders resorted to 'passive resistance' and declined to pay their rates, and as soon as the Liberals got into power they introduced a Bill to prevent rate assistance going to Voluntary Schools. F. E. Smith built up his political reputation by the speeches which he made in opposing this abortive Bill: he spoke of it as 'a brutal dictation of terms' by the Nonconformist majority, adding, 'Thus conscience does make bullies of us all.'² Viewed retrospectively, the intense bitterness of this political wrangle seems hardly to be justified; indeed, Halévy goes so far as to suggest that it was fomented to create a diversion from those labour and social questions 'which threatened to prove equally dangerous to both the traditional parties.'³ It is certain, at least, that the controversy about the Voluntary Schools obscured as a smoke screen the major significance of the Balfour Act. Some appreciated it: Sidney Webb, for example, and Graham Wallas, who was on the London School Board while the Cockerton judgment was under consideration; but it escaped the notice of the great majority. 'As for the Cecil faction,' says Halévy, 'and their leader, Arthur Balfour, they probably saw in the Act only two features—the grant of financial aid to the denominational schools of the Anglican Church and the abolition of the Board Schools whose extravagance had long been the object of Tory denunciation.

¹ Balfour: *Educational Systems of Great Britain and Ireland* (O.U.P., 1903),

p. 33.
² *Birkenhead: The First Phase*, by his Son (Thornton Butterworth), chap. xiv.

³ Halévy: *History of the English People*, Epilogue (Book 2) (Penguin), p. 129.

And there can be little doubt that the energy which the Education Committees of the County Councils displayed, as soon as they came into existence, must have disconcerted them considerably. "I did not realise," Arthur Balfour admitted later to an eminent Socialist, "that the Act would mean more expense and more bureaucracy."¹

The great achievement of the Balfour Act, however, was the setting up of Local Education Authorities with powers that embraced all branches of education; and as a by-product of this, development of higher education throughout the country. All the advice that Matthew Arnold had so insistently given about organising secondary education had become practicable, for the Act enabled Secondary Schools to be provided or assisted by the Local Authorities, and in such a way that the religious controversies which had deflected the progress of elementary education were not acutely provoked. In applying money for purposes of higher education under the Act, Councils are not to require the teaching of any particular form of religious instruction or worship in any aided school or college, and no catechism or distinctive religious formulary is to be taught in a provided school or college, nor in such a school is a pupil to be placed in an inferior position because of his or her religious belief. Pupils in maintained or aided schools are not to be required to attend Church or Sunday School, and the times of religious lessons in such schools are to be conveniently arranged so as to permit the withdrawal of any pupil at the request of the parent. Thus in effect the Forster compromise was translated to the sphere of higher education, and it has been honourably observed, arousing very little controversy. As an immediate consequence of the Balfour Act a rapid growth of secondary education has taken place. 'In 1904 there were 86,000 pupils in average attendance; in 1914 there were 187,000. Very rapid expansion during the war years, due both to the increased income of the working classes and the idealistic spirit of the time, brought the number to 308,000 in 1919. It is now (1940) 470,000. In 1904 the total number of schools was 575; it is now 1,398. Of these, 773 are provided by the L.E.A.s; the remainder consists of 92 Roman Catholic schools, 430 Endowed and other schools, and the 103 Welsh Intermediate schools. In 1907 it was found difficult to keep the pupils after fifteen and for more than three years of

¹ Halévy: *History of the English People*, Epilogue (Book 2), (Penguin), pp. 122-3.

the four-year course; now the average leaving age is sixteen and a half and the average length of school life almost five years. In 1914, 56 out of every 1,000 elementary school children aged between ten and eleven entered a secondary school; now 137 per 1,000 do so. The total number admitted in 1937-8 was close on 100,000. Girls in particular have benefited, since nearly half the pupils are girls, though before 1902 an elementary school girl's chances of secondary education were practically nil.¹

Neither the State nor the Local Authority has interfered excessively in the affairs of Secondary Schools, maintained or aided; and it certainly would be difficult to show that Grammar Schools, assisted by the Local Authorities under the powers conferred by the Balfour Act, have suffered any notable deprivation of independence. There have of course been complaints of undue interference, but without much justification, while on the other hand there has been a demand, notably in the Spens Report, for a much more vigorous attitude on the part of the State and the Local Authorities to the various problems of post-primary school organisation. Certainly up to the present—and the application of the Spens Report has not yet been considered—there has been nothing like 'State control' of secondary education; and people who suggest that the State should save the Public Schools by taking them under its control misunderstand the traditional relationship in England and Wales between Public Authorities and Governing Bodies. 'The word "control" connected with things educational,' said Earl De La Warr when, as President of the Board of Education, he referred to the future of the Public Schools, 'has an ugly sound. The State helps the Universities, and they give some service in return, but there has never been any question of controlling the Universities. I would like to assert here and now that the idea of buying the right to control the Public Schools is one that is very repugnant to all English people.'² The *Journal of Education* takes much the same line in discussing the possible attitude of Local Authorities to Public Schools in the event of collaboration being considered desirable in the national interest. 'It has been necessary,' it asserts, 'for the local education authorities to come to the aid of a large number of endowed Grammar Schools, and with most of

¹ J. E. Hales: *British Education* (published for the British Council by Longmans), p. 27.

² *Sunday Times*, March 17th, 1940.

these the authorities have succeeded in establishing thoroughly satisfactory relations. Their financial position has been strengthened without impairment of individuality. Grants in aid of capital expenditure can be made, as they are by the Kent Education Authority, without requiring any alteration of status. The position of the Public Schools will be strengthened by the presence on their governing bodies of a certain number of representatives of local education authorities. Without the active co-operation of these authorities the Public Schools cannot take their proper place in our national system of education.¹ Unless there is after the war a reaffirmation of *étatisme*, a fervent revival of the gospel of efficiency and an enhanced faith in organisation—and it is difficult to foresee how our political philosophy will shape—there does not seem to be much likelihood of a departure from the traditional policy of mild intervention in secondary education. The Fleming Report, which is referred to in the final chapter, certainly reflects a marked desire not to stray too far from the ancient ways.

The Regulations of the Board of Education from 1904 onwards have made few demands on Secondary Schools; they ask for little more than a minimum four-year course, a liberal curriculum, a percentage of free places and an adequate staff. By special grants the Board have done much to encourage sixth-form studies, and in the last thirty years the percentage of teachers with University degrees has risen from 54 to 78. In the Secondary School world the only feature which bears any resemblance to despotism is the School Certificate examination: that certainly has for years had a profound influence on the curriculum. But it is a self-imposed thralldom, and not one for which either the Board of Education or the Local Authority is responsible. It is the Professor's way of sticking his oar into secondary education, and ensuring that it is on the best academic lines. But his is a gentle sort of tyranny and bears no resemblance to the sort of control which the ecclesiastics exercised in the days when the Grammar Schools looked to the Church and not the State as the fount of authority. Consider, for example, the educational canons of the Convocation of Canterbury (1529) and in particular one entitled 'De ludimagistris et uniformi docendi modo.' 'For the common benefit,' it concludes, 'of the whole province of Canterbury, with the approval of this holy council, we ordain,

¹ *Journal of Education*: Article on 'The Public School,' November, 1940.

in order that after a year from the date of the publication of these presents, there shall be one uniform method of teaching throughout the whole province of Canterbury, no author of grammar rules or precepts shall be put before boys being taught grammar, except the one which the Archbishop of Canterbury with four other bishops of the province, four abbots and four archdeacons to be named at this synod shall next year prescribe for boys to read.¹

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

When at the close of the eighteenth century George Birkbeck gathered together a group of Glasgow artisans and lectured to them on the wonders of science he initiated a movement which spread rapidly through industrial Britain and led to the establishment of the first Mechanics' Institutes. By the middle of the century there were over 600 institutes of this kind, many of them with a large if fluctuating membership; not only did they provide lectures on scientific and technical subjects, but they also as a rule had libraries attached to them and were thus pioneers of the public library movement. They met with a good deal of opposition from people who feared that they would make working-men dissatisfied with their station or kindle among them a spirit of free thought, and their supporters were constantly answering criticisms of this kind or conciliating opposition by banning political or religious discussion. 'I am at a loss,' said Sir Benjamin Heywood, President of the Manchester Mechanics' Institution, in 1827, 'to see how we are disturbing the proper station of the working classes, and giving them an undue elevation; we do not alter their relative position; a spirit of intellectual activity, unequalled in any age or country, now prevails amongst us, and, if the superstructure be renewed and strengthened, it does not seem fitting that the foundation should be neglected.'² The Institutes did a great work, but they failed to justify the high hopes of the enlightened people who founded them and gradually they faded out. There were several reasons for their decline, but the chief cause was the absence of an adequate educational background among their students, many of whom were almost illiterate; and in addition it must be remembered

¹ Leach: *Educational Charters* (C.U.P.), p. 447.

² Quoted by J. L. and Barbara Hammond: *The Bleak Age* (Longmans, 1934), pp. 109-10.

that they were obliged to rely upon subscriptions and voluntary support. They, however, served a pioneer purpose, and some of them developed later into the Technical Institutions with which we are familiar to-day.

The State began to take an interest in technical education in the middle of the nineteenth century, and by means of the South Kensington Science and Art Department, it distributed grants to science classes and conducted examinations for teachers of science. The scientific movement and the example of Germany and the U.S.A. led to a demand for technical education, and this prompted the Government to set up the Devonshire Commission on Scientific Instruction (1871-5). Ten years later another Royal Commission on 'Technical Instruction' was constituted, which surveyed the existing provision and made recommendations. 'The Commissioners enquired, not merely into the provision of technical instruction in the narrower sense, but also into the teaching of science, on which it must necessarily be based, from the Elementary School upwards. Its report woke the country to the need, not only of specialised technical instruction, but of getting the preliminary work done in Secondary Schools, and indirectly to the necessity for providing a better supply of Secondary Schools generally. Its direct outcome was the Technical Instruction Act of 1889, but it played no small part in leading up to the Bryce Commission on Secondary Education and to the Education Act of 1902.'¹

The Technical Instruction Act is a measure of some historical importance; several leading politicians and eminent scientists, especially Huxley and Roscoe, had banded together to press for some such development. It is interesting, not only as the origin of organised technical instruction in this country, but also because it anticipated the Balfour Act in selecting the County Councils and the County Borough Councils as 'the authorities' for supplying and aiding technical education. It empowered these authorities to levy a penny rate for these purposes, and a year later their finances were assisted by the assignment to them by Parliament of certain excise accumulations known as 'whisky money.' It is worth remembering that the definition of technical education in the Act was widely drawn and embraced the modern elements of the Secondary School curriculum. Another important educational measure reached the statute book in the same year, namely, the Welsh Intermediate Education Act upon which Wales has

¹ Archer: *Secondary Education in the XIXth Century* (C.U.P.), p. 281.

built up her modern system of secondary education; it was intended that these schools should supply the needs of Welsh children as regards technical as well as secondary education, and the detailed references to the technical side of education in this Act are evidence of the prevailing interest at that time in technical studies. 'It was intended that there should be "technical education,"' and this was defined as including, *inter alia*, instruction in subjects 'applicable to the purposes of agriculture, industries, trade or commercial life and practice suited to the needs of the district.'¹ The strength of the Grammar School tradition in Britain is illustrated by the way in which the Welsh Intermediate Education Act has, in spite of these references to technical education, become principally a means of providing an essentially secondary and fairly academic type of education. The flames of religious controversy have scarcely touched technical education, and indeed it can claim to be the least disputatious branch of education. The brief official Regulations for Further Education do, however, include a conscience clause, applicable to Technical Schools receiving direct grant, which occupies more space than any reference to technical education. It is doubtful whether the absence of storms has been wholly an advantage; it is possible indeed that technical education would have made greater progress if it had provoked more contest. Certainly it would have been helpful if industry had more actively intervened in its development, and it is to be hoped that when peace returns industry will appreciate to a greater extent than in the past how much industrial and commercial progress depends upon the availability and support of the right kind of technical education.

Schools under Local Authority jurisdiction send over half a million entrants into industry and commerce each year, and the young people concerned are of all grades of ability and cover the widest possible range of aptitude and attainment. In England and Wales the percentages of entrants from the different types of school in recent years have been approximately as follows:

			<i>Per cent.</i>
Senior Technical	. . .	3,000	= $\frac{1}{3}$
Junior Technical	. . .	12,000	= $2\frac{1}{2}$
Secondary	47,000	= 9
Central and Senior	. . .	252,000	= 49
Unreorganised Elementary	. . .	198,000	= 39

¹ *Report of the Consultative Committee on Secondary Education* (Spens Report), p. 343.

There are similar variations also in the age of entry into industry; the normal minimum age will rise to fifteen and later to sixteen under the new Education Act; the average secondary school leaving age just before the war was sixteen years seven months, that of Junior Technical Schools fifteen and a half, while that of the Technical College ranges from about seventeen to twenty-one or over. Statistically, the contribution of the Universities to industry is modest, especially if one thinks of it in terms of students possessing some technological or scientific knowledge. For the total number of University students graduating or receiving diplomas in a pre-war year is approximately 16,000, and of these only about 3,000 have studied Science and less than 2,000 Technology, allowing it the widest possible connotation. Nor does the proportion of University students normally entering industry make an impressive figure: the Oxford Appointments Board, for example, announced in 1938 that the number of graduates for which it found employment was 498, of whom only 94 entered business or industry. It may be that the figures of Modern Universities wear a more industrial complexion, but Universities can be found in the heart of a great industrial population where the emphasis for good or ill is strongly on the side of the Arts and kindred faculties. Nor is there any strong evidence in the post-graduate work in Universities of a desire to assist industry in grappling with new problems. 'Anyone,' it has been said, 'who takes the trouble to run through the titles of theses deposited in University libraries or printed by University presses must be appalled by the amount of misapplied effort . . . yet they continue to encourage students to pursue the depressing task of burrowing through rubbish heaps to the degree of M.A. or Ph.D.'¹ These observations are made, not in any spirit of criticism; there is much to be said for adherence to the ancient ways and for a maintenance of interest in the humanities. The point which it is desired to make is that industry should not expect too much of the Universities; in their case business is a side-line and not a principal export.

The close association of industry with the management of Technical Education is therefore of vital importance to our national prosperity. Industrialists, Local Authorities and teachers cannot afford not to work together, and every effort is worth while to remove any barriers which keep them apart. One

¹ Alderton Pink: *If the Blind Lead* (Benn), p. 171.

barrier is the difficulty which rationalised industry finds in maintaining active touch with local affairs: it has become depersonalised, and it is necessary to find some way of restoring that personal touch with local government which combines, chains and rationalisings have obliterated. Another barrier, equally serious, concerns the curriculum and crystallises in the misunderstandings which have gathered around the innocent word 'vocational.' About thirty years ago it was the fashion among enlightened educationists to advocate the teaching of practical subjects, but at the same time to deplore any utilitarian tendency. In the Handicraft Room, according to the prevailing educational theory, there was more virtue in making a useless article than a useful one; and 'vocational' was in many quarters employed almost as a term of abuse. This prejudice still lingers, and it is desirable that it should be dragged into the open and its merits and demerits fully exposed. It has a learned history which has been pieced together with characteristic erudition by Dr. R. F. Young in an appendix to the Spens Report. A good deal of the prejudice in educational circles has been created by employers in the past who in a manner made familiar by Charles Dickens, the Hammonds, Mr. R. H. Tawney and Mr. A. E. Dobbs confined their interest in education to what they called useful knowledge—that is to say, knowledge useful to them in their factory, mill or business. They selfishly ignored human values. Echoes of this extreme utilitarianism may still be heard, and sound harshly on the ears of people devoting their energies to the well-being of children. With this historical background it is not surprising that the Trades Union Congress adopted a cautious attitude to quite modest suggestions in the Spens Report for the infusion of some technical teaching into the later stages of the Secondary School curriculum. 'The practical bias,' they say, 'should not be introduced with regard to the future employment of the child, but because of its greater educational value.'¹ There is happily a growing recognition of the fact, both in industrial and education circles, that in this kaleidoscopic age a general education is necessary to manager and artisan alike, but that this does not preclude the necessity for training in vocational principles. We seem slowly to be approximating to the view expressed by Professor Whitehead about fourteen years ago, when he said: 'The antithesis between a technical and a liberal education is

¹ Trades Union Congress: *Statement on the Spens Report* (1939), p. 7.

fallacious. There can be no adequate technical education which is not liberal, and no liberal education which is not technical.'

That education and industry can collaborate with great mutual benefit is shown by the first-fruits of the regional movement in Technical Education stimulated by a Conference Report on *Co-operation in Technical Education* issued by the Board of Education in 1937. The main purpose of that Report was to encourage Local Authorities to work together so as to 'pool' technical facilities and prevent duplication, but to do this efficiently it is necessary first to ascertain with some degree of precision the educational needs of industry in each regional area. This in some cases has led to the setting up of Joint Advisory Committees, composed mainly of representatives of industry, of experts on the staffs of technical colleges and schools, and special inspectors of the Board of Education; and experience has shown that such Committees have been able to work swiftly and effectively in surveying existing provision and indicating new requirements. Similar Advisory bodies have for some years dealt with the question of examinations in technical subjects. Collaboration with a particular industry depends to some extent on the way in which that industry is organised. 'One of the difficulties of close co-operation with an industry as a whole,' a Principal of great experience, Mr. Paley Yorke, has said, 'lies in the fact that not all industries are organised for co-operation.' On the same point, the following observation by Principal Richardson of Derby is illuminating: 'On the whole it is the more modern industries, those dependent more directly on scientific principles and those which have arisen out of modern research, that are most anxious to educate their people and place some value on education. . . . The older industries, such as textiles and mining, have not as yet made any large-scale arrangements of this kind; yet it is just these industries that complain of difficult times and the severity of foreign competition. Undoubtedly they are suffering from the lack of an educated personnel, and the outlook for them seems the more gloomy in the knowledge of what is being undertaken to provide competing firms in other lands with fully trained recruits to all grades.' It is also of the utmost importance that the government of technical education should be so organised as to ensure that knowledge of new processes and the achievements of research reaches the College lecture-rooms and laboratories with a minimum of delay. Much can be done to facilitate this by

(a) the establishment of Regional Advisory Committees for each leading industry, (b) the provision of frequent Refresher Courses for Technical Teachers, (c) the employment by every large Local Authority of an Organiser of Technical Education, responsible for keeping in touch with local industry and being thoroughly aware of its needs in the light of new developments. By some such methods we could do much to correct our traditional tendency of being slow off the mark and too tolerant of time-lags.

ADULT EDUCATION

Except for a few famous polytechnics and similar institutions, Technical Education is principally a State service administered by Local Authorities. Adult education of the non-vocational type is, on the other hand, largely a product of voluntary enterprise, and its genesis as an organised force is due to the initiative of enlightened University teachers, notably Professor Stuart of Cambridge, around about 1870. They sought, by means of the University Extension Movement, to give the men and women of the new democracy some of the advantages of a University education by sending lecturers to any local 'centre' ready to receive them. Halévy concludes his *History of the English People* with the observation: "England is a free country"; this means at bottom that England is a country of voluntary obedience, of an organisation freely initiated and freely accepted.' Of none of our services has this been more true than of the Adult Education Movement; from its foundation right up to the present time it has resisted every temptation to accept the care and protection of the State. Local Authorities share in the task of providing adult education, and they supplement the grants which the voluntary organisations receive from the Government; but there is no rigorous co-ordination of effort nor a great amount of organisation. There is, on the other hand, much goodwill and friendly co-operation which prevents excessive overlapping; and there is a fine spirit of loyalty to the movement among students of the tutorial courses. A similar absence of co-ordination is to be found in the provision of adult education in the U.S.A., and it has been the subject of criticism.¹ But both here and in the U.S.A. there are many who prefer the existing loosely knit co-operation

¹ See, for example, the Reports of the Regents' Inquiry into Education in the State of New York, especially the publications *Education for American Life* and *Adult Education* (McGraw-Hill Book Coy., 1938).

to anything resembling State control; and this view is shared by collectivists and individualists alike. 'I prefer,' says Mr. Ernest Green, General Secretary of the Workers' Educational Association, 'to believe that the work of voluntary providing bodies and L.E.A.s in the field of Adult Education is complementary to each, and that both the approach, the personnel and the general objectives are amenable to co-operation, but not to co-ordination.'¹ It has been estimated that there are about 18 million people in Britain who might be regarded as 'possible' students of adult education, and that of these only about 2½ million take advantage of the education provided, of whom over 75 per cent. attend classes in technical or other vocational subjects or in physical training. While it is true that much adult education is acquired in ways which the educational blue-books do not record—home reading, drama, cinema, B.B.C. and so on—it cannot be denied that the number benefiting by the Adult Education Movement is regrettably small. When the war is over it will be necessary for L.E.A.s, the Universities, the W.E.A. and other adult education interests to take counsel together as to how to attract a larger clientele without lowering educational standards or over-organising. Such a co-operative effort had indeed already begun, upon the initiative of the Board of Education, and was shaping hopefully when the outbreak of war brought it to a standstill.

The religious controversies which have so much affected other branches of education have scarcely touched the Adult Education Movement. It has, however, in a rather acute form a number of problems which involve the fundamental issue of liberty. The movement has always been conscious of these problems, but never more so than in the years immediately before the war, when excellent people, anxious to combat Hitlerism, were inclined to say that our Adult Education Classes should be used to make us good democrats. Not all meant the same by this proposal. Some had in mind nothing more than an increase in the number of classes and courses dealing with political subjects. 'Political education for adults on a non-party basis' said Mr. Bassett, 'needs to be encouraged in every possible way. The democratic State should regard this as one of its indispensable functions.'² Such a proposal was wholly in keeping with the tradition of the

¹ *Educating for Democracy* (edited by Cohen and Travers; Macmillan), p. 105.

² Bassett: *Essentials of Parliamentary Democracy* (Macmillan), p. 173.

Adult Education Movement, but there were others who would have liked the aim of such teaching to be, not so much a study of politics, as a grounding in the democratic creed. The arrangement of classes to impose or inculcate a particular form of political belief would be a complete reversal of that cherished tradition of freedom to which the pioneers of adult education in this country attached great importance. One of the reasons why people who would nationalise almost everything else are strong voluntarists in their attitude to adult education is because they share that fear which possessed John Stuart Mill that in certain circumstances State education can swiftly become 'a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another.'

One of the great educating forces in Britain is party politics; there is much to be said against it, but at its best it provides an admirable forum for the ventilation of opinion, and many people have acquired their political philosophy by sorting out the arguments of the rival parties. The Bonar Law College at Ashridge and Ruskin College at Oxford should find a place in any list of leading educational institutions; their residential courses afford an excellent means of acquiring an insight into public affairs, and such party loyalties as these colleges suggest do not for the intelligent student diminish the value of the political education which they provide. There is room for a considerable development of the Residential Adult Education Institute as a method of introducing by week-end and longer courses some of the social advantages of University life to a wider public.

Adult education has suffered a good deal from a tendency, especially when the expenditure of public money is involved, to avoid controversial subjects. If in pre-war days a tutorial group discussed Communism, critics were apt to allege subversive propaganda; while, on the other hand, if the group turned its attention to the British Empire, critics of another colour would not be slow to suggest an imperialist outlook. As learning by discussion is the essence of adult education, it loses half its vitality if there is not complete freedom of speech and thought and a readiness to face all issues squarely, controversial though some of them may be. It is, however, important that the discussions should be based on knowledge, and that the argument should reflect study and not be mere dialectic. In the past we have been over-cautious in the choice of subjects and in the conduct of discussion, with the excellent intention of not giving

offence to grant-distributing bodies. In America the same cautious spirit has been at work with unfortunate results. 'Courses in government, political economy, sociology, and ethics,' says J. H. Robinson in his *Mind in the Making*, 'confine themselves to inoffensive generalisations, harmless details of organisation, and the commonplaces of routine morality, for only in that way can they escape being controversial.' It is remarkable how many people dislike hearing opinions which differ from their own.

We owe much to the B.B.C. for the good democratic example which they have set by providing talks in which opinions are freely and variously expressed on many controversial subjects. These have from time to time engendered vigorous criticism, but this has not prevented the B.B.C. from continuing its good work, and ensuring that its public hears the case for and against most of the great issues of the day. But the classic case of the hostility aroused by J. B. Priestley's broadcasts provides an illustration of that kind of hypersensitiveness from which adult education has suffered from the early pioneer years to this very day. 'Surely,' says Mr. Graham Greene, in words that recall the atmosphere in which the Priestley Postscripts lived and so suddenly underwent an eclipse, 'it was a sign of something that the B.B.C. should allow a speaker to refer to the old false peace, "the defeat of goodwill," to appeal openly for a new order in England after the war. The result of course could have been foreseen . . . and in no time angry letters were being received, accusing him of trying to divide the country. He was told to get off the air "before the Government puts you where you belong." It was obvious that "the old hands, the experts, the smooth gentry," "the pundits and mandarins of the Fifth Button," the people "who for years have been rotten with unsatisfied vanity" had recognised a dangerous enemy. And so, on Sunday, October 20th, Mr. Priestley went off the air. He explained that his relations with the B.B.C. had always been excellent, he said that he was tired by five months of broadcasting, but he also said, "There are other reasons."'¹

This is the kind of opposition to opinion that the Adult Education tutor has too often to endure, and if to avoid it he timidly plays for safety and becomes just a conduit pipe of information,

¹ *Spectator*, December 13th, 1940. Review of *Postscripts* (J. B. Priestley), by Mr. Graham Greene.

his students lose all the stimulus of vigorous discussion. For the technique of the best adult teaching is based upon tutorial study and corporate discussion. The student has as a rule some experience of industry and of affairs, as portrayed in the newspapers; he can be expected therefore to exercise his own judgment, and to sort out the why and wherefore of a controversy if the issues are fairly placed before him. Adult education is of course much more than a means of acquiring knowledge; under happy auspices it can be a powerful spiritual force and a stimulating introduction to the joys of intellectual fellowship. 'The power of the movement,' says Dr. Mansbridge of the early days of the W.E.A., 'lay in the fact that it inspired its members, and those with whom it came into contact, to give of their highest and best, because to do so was the way of life.' Archbishop Temple bore similar testimony. 'There was,' he said, 'more of evangelistic quality about those early W.E.A. gatherings than about most assemblies convened under any such name or description. The cause that brought them together was not concerned with the means of life, as in a commercial enterprise, but with the very quality of life. Consequently it was able to effect a truly personal union.'¹

It will be one of the principal tasks of the coming generation to effect a widespread development of adult education, and it is to be hoped that in accomplishing it they will be mindful of the importance of local initiative, freedom to experiment and ample room for individual effort. There is always a danger, when rapidly expanding an existing service, of succumbing to what Shaw calls in his *Apple Cart* the fallacy of the rubber stamp. 'This,' to quote one of the most inspiring exponents of adult education in our time, 'is the most dangerous and the most persistent of the fallacies of democracy.'²

¹ *Citizen and Churchman* (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1941), pp. 95, 96.

² John L. Stocks: *Hobhouse Lecture on Materialism in Politics* (O.U.P., 1937).

CHAPTER VI

THE SCHOOL AS A SOCIETY AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMMUNITY

‘The object of men in associating is to live a good life together, which it would be impossible for each living by himself to attain.’ (*Thomas Aquinas: De Regimine Principum.*)

THE SCHOOL AS A SOCIETY

There are two principal ways in which a school leads a community life: one is by means of its corporate activity within the school frontiers, the other by participating in social or civic activities outside its own boundaries. Both ways are important in their educational consequences and in their influence on our national character; it seems likely that if post-primary education is reconstructed after the war, these intra- and extra-mural aspects of school life will receive more than their present share of attention.

Within the school British education is admittedly strong in its emphasis on character training and its stress on the art of living together. Although at the moment people seem rather more interested in the shortcomings of our Public Schools than in their virtues, few will gainsay that our school tradition owes much to their cultivation of the corporate life as a method of rearing good citizens and instilling a sense of leadership. ‘Everyone knows,’ says a principal critic, ‘the Public School virtues, self-control, courage, endurance, loyalty.’¹ What was best in the Public School revival of mid-Victorian days has now been absorbed into our general educational philosophy, with the result that schools of every type in this country practise in some degree the various methods of indirect training in social habit which the great Victorian head masters were so fond of expounding. This training begins at the nursery stage and permeates the whole range of school provision; Margaret Macmillan was as emphatic in her stress on the significance of a corporate life as Arnold or Thring. Nor must we ever forget how much we owe to assistant masters

¹ T. C. Worsley: *The End of the Old School Tie* (Secker & Warburg, 1941), p. 13.

and mistresses as architects of this fine tradition; consider, for example, the influence which men like Bowen of Harrow have had on our educational and even our political thought. His 'play the game' has certainly had much to do with our national faith—perhaps excessive, and sometimes misplaced—in the virtues of team-spirit and co-operation. When taught too narrowly such an ethic can produce an exaggerated zeal for house or school, and in national affairs a tendency to be all for the party and seldom for the State. But it is a valuable social cement, and it is not, as experience has shown, incompatible with an individualism that can be enterprising and audacious. When in 1903 the Elementary School Code included a first reference to 'the corporate life of school,' it was regarded as a rather exciting innovation; to-day some of the best social activity and leadership training is to be found in Elementary Schools, and when all post-primary education operates in the future under one Code, it will be found that Public, Secondary and the former Senior Schools have as a common background this faith in a well-developed communal life as a means of acquiring subconsciously a sense of social discipline and a decent civic spirit.

It is sometimes said that the Residential School is a better training-ground for character than the Day School, because it has a fuller and more continuous corporate existence. Indeed, a leading Public School head master contended recently that such schools can accomplish a far more complete religious training because they have the boy twenty-four hours a day. One suspects that this argument is founded on a good many fallacies; for, as Aristotle and many since have observed, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and it is doubtful whether the Public Schools have a monopoly of saints or even of Scripture credits. For a training in the civic virtues it is doubtful whether any institution can provide anything that will compare with the double advantage of a good home and a good day school. Without, however, pursuing this ancient controversy, we can agree with the head master to the extent of concurring in the view that religious and social training can be far better accomplished when a school lives the life of a corporate society. In that respect it is possible that the Public Schools have an advantage not always shared by schools which have grown up since 1870 or 1902. Developed under the ægis of the State, the latter are, in spite of their full social life, seldom corporate entities, operating under

their own instrument, ordinance or charter. It may be argued that there is not much in that, and that the value of a separate ordinance is at most one of status in a world in which status counts for less and less. It is possible, however, that the point has more substance in it than we are ready to admit, and that the idea of the separate ordinance is based on thoroughly sound educational considerations.

Most of our schools, it must be remembered, have grown to maturity during a period in which a sort of neo-Hegelian outlook has held sway in Government circles. A gentlemanly sort of *étatisme* has permeated the innumerable codes, circulars and administrative memoranda which have regulated their existence. They have often had to turn and presently to right about turn to comply with requirements; they have drunk more milk, arranged more periods of physical training, and done many other things, not because it was their own idea, but because the Great Leviathan in his infinite wisdom said so. Schools have waited in grim suspense while the Hadow and the Spens Committees indulged in years of deliberation, producing conclusions involving mass organisation and reorganisation. Applied in an English way by a Board of Education which still practises Matthew Arnold's sweet reasonableness, this regimentation from a central switch-board allows room for local initiative and some pleasant diversity. But it has its dangers. The totalitarians have shown us how an all-powerful State can misuse education to serve political ends: control under a Plato may turn a myriad eyes to the light, but under a Hitler it can, by a Lacedæmonian twist of the screw, be made to produce a generation of militarists and destroy the peace of the world. There is much to be said for the Local Authority or Governing Body as bulwarks against regimentation by circulars, examination syllabuses and administrative memoranda; and there is a positive value in an age of reconstruction in having an educational order which will allow much elasticity and room for bold experiment. When, about forty years ago, Maitland presented Gierke with such enthusiasm to English readers, the implications were nothing like so clear as they are to-day; now Maitland's action has almost a prophetic quality, a message for our times, in that Gierke shows by reference to the mediæval world how important a part corporations, associations and societies can play in the framework of civilisation. It was against such a background that many of our schools came into being as

living communities duly incorporated: William of Wykeham, for example, occupies many pages in defining his ordinances which prescribe that wardens, scholars, clerks and others 'shall associate together as colleagues and collegiate persons.' In the new educational order is there not room for some restoration and expansion of the collegiate element in school government?

If the Public Schools have been successful in showing the way to a corporate school life, it must be confessed that they have never met with much success in their extra-mural contacts. Here the new Modern, Central or Senior School is doing some magnificent pioneer work, succeeding often in creating itself a college or educational cathedral for its immediate neighbourhood. This is a great improvement upon the aloofness to which Grammar Schools have, to their own loss, so often been prone throughout the ages. 'The School,' Dewey once said, 'is at present engaged largely upon the futile task of Sisyphus. It is endeavouring to form practically an intellectual habit in children for use in a social life which is, as it would almost seem, carefully and purposely kept away from any vital contact with the child who is thus undergoing training. The only way to prepare for social life is to engage in social life.' Schools which make training in good citizenship their central aim are often most exclusive in their contacts; it is, however, surely important that pupils should receive their initiation into the civic virtues in an environment of good neighbourliness. What varies, T. H. Green wisely observes, is not so much the sense of duty to a neighbour as the practical answer to the question, who is my neighbour?¹

THE COMMUNAL AND CORPORATE TRADITION

Mediæval thought is at its best when it is exploring the widest possible community, the Empire, the Church and that supreme unity, the City of God itself, embracing heaven and earth. But communities large and small tend to have similar problems and schools in particular resemble a universe in miniature. For such reasons, when thinkers like John of Salisbury talk to us across the ages about human society, it becomes apparent that their thought has had an influence also upon lesser communities. Indeed, it was not unusual for the mediæval speculator to surmise

¹ The first section of this chapter recently appeared in the *Journal of Education*, and I am indebted to the Editor for permission to reproduce it here.

that within the City of God, the macrocosmos, were many smaller communities, microcosmi, to which his arguments about the former bore some relation. Thus Dante saw a correspondence between the *universitas humana* and the countless minor communities which were part of the great Whole.¹ It is to this intellectual tradition that we owe our conception of school as a society with a corporate life: we owe to it also our acceptance of voluntary organisations as social concepts with some measure of historical sanction. Mediæval thought is naturally responsive to the idea of community, and many of its philosophers were monks living a communal life. Moreover, they were much influenced by the infiltration of Roman Law, a knowledge of which travelled far and wide from the famous legal schools established at Pavia, Ravenna, and most important of all at Bologna. *Societas* was an essential element of Roman Law and implied an association of partners for the benefit of all concerned.² The mediæval mind also borrowed largely from Aristotle's *Politics*, in which the self-sufficing character of the community is stressed, and it had as a background the Teutonic idea of communal fellowship which was a feature of our Anglo-Saxon social organisation. Upon this basis was gradually constructed a doctrine of corporation which from the standpoint of education is all-important, as is the mediæval conception of society as organic and not mechanical. 'Mediæval thought proceeded from the idea of a single whole. Therefore an organic construction of Human Society was as familiar to it as a mechanical and atomistic construction was originally alien. Under the influence of biblical allegories and the models set by Greek and Roman writers, the comparison of Mankind at large and every smaller group to an animate body was universally adopted and pressed.'³

John of Salisbury, for example, expounding the Pauline view that we are members of one body, applies his literary scalpel and dissects the mystical body into component parts; while we can pass this anthropomorphism by with a smile, we cannot ignore the fact that the ideas which evolved out of this sense of membership are still active. The conception of various members of the one body with a diversity of gifts helped to create the idea of an

¹ Dante: *De Monarchia*, I, c. 7.

² Hadley: *Introduction to Roman Law* (1890), p. 231.

³ Gierke: *Political Theories of the Middle Age*, translated, with an introduction by Maitland (1913), p. 10.

ordered community in which each member or group of members had his part to perform. Thus individuals within a community came to be regarded 'not as equal units, but as socially grouped and differentiated from each other.'¹ Groups were assigned functions, and their relationship one to another was explored; and always there was the idea of the single unifying force in each community—*voluntas una et regulatrix*, as Dante calls it. The mediæval arguments took a form as applicable to the small community as to the universal, and in effect they established with a surviving force the corporate identity of communities. So much so, indeed, that many lawyers have come to the conclusion that 'in these days of free association, if a group behaves as a corporation, the courts are well-nigh compelled to treat it as such, at least in retrospect.'² When, therefore, we consider the impregnability of the corporate traditions which some of our universities and schools enjoy, it is well to remember the long history which explains it. Let us refer to Gierke for the last time. 'The Romano-Canonical Theory of Corporations,' he observes, 'although it decomposed and radically transmuted the German notion of the autonomous life of communities and fellowships, always ensured to the non-sovereign community a certain independent life of its own, a sphere of rights within the domain of Public Law, a sphere that belonged to it merely because it was a community, and lastly an organic interposition between the Individual and the Community of All.'³

Thus when in 1264 Walter de Merton founded the first English College, he created a community within the *Universitas* of Oxford and both College and University had corporate rights. Moreover, the Merton Community consisted of two parts: a *domus* of twenty scholars on Walter's estate at Malden and a *societas* in Oxford. Both parts, however, were members of the same body and were one community; the first code of statutes 'constitutes a self-governing corporate secular community, with common property and the ultimate administration of it in common, with a common life and common aim of study, and a common rule.'⁴ It was an organism with a biology of its own; and in the same way, when some five hundred years earlier Charle-

¹ Gierke: *Political Theories of the Middle Age*, translated, with an introduction by Maitland (1913), p. 28.

² *Ibid.*, p. xxxviii: Maitland's Introduction.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

⁴ Henderson: *Merton College* (1899), p. 8.

magne established Elementary Schools, he deliberately attached them to monasteries and provided them with communal associations. 'Let them join,' he said of the monks, 'and associate to themselves not only children of servile condition, but also sons of freemen.' This sense of association, corporativeness, communal independence and trusteeship has played a great part in our educational history, and it would be unfortunate if a too mechanical view of school government should deprive us of its benefits. 'One of the deepest social tendencies in our long history has been that which sets towards voluntary organisation. Our country, above all countries, has been a paradise of guilds and clubs. In our Middle Ages there was an abundance of merchant guilds, craft guilds, religious guilds; there were Inns of Court for the lawyers, and free Universities, which were guilds of masters, or scholars, or both, for the body of students. The same sort of abundance marks our modern history. The law of trust, under cover of which property can be held by trustees for a voluntary organisation which cannot or does not itself hold property, has co-operated with our native tendency to produce a network of social groups. By its aid, Nonconformist congregations and societies have organised themselves; great companies have arisen which have helped at once to extend our commerce and to found our Empire, and trade unions have grown until they have come to embrace the majority of the working classes.'¹ It seems likely that one of the principal tasks of the coming generation of educational reformers will be to join together in compatible wedlock the modern idea of the dominant State and the mediæval idea of the free community, and it is probable that such a marriage will provide the happiest solution of the problem of religious education to which our present approach is usually schematic and mechanical. -

THE SCHOOL, THE STATE AND THE COMMUNITY

It is not impossible, therefore, that during the coming years a new educational creed will develop more in harmony with that kind of political philosophy which attaches great importance to the community and draws a sharp distinction between it and the State. 'The State,' says Dr. MacIver, 'is seen to be, not the community, but a peculiarly authoritative association within it. The State is determinate, a closed organisation of social life; com-

¹ Barker: *National Character* (Methuen, 1927), pp. 274, 275.

munity is indeterminate, an ever-evolving system spreading beyond and only partially controlled within the definite framework of any State.' In the course of the same argument, he contends that 'the law of the State must be mainly (though by no means wholly) negative. It must for the most part be content (as the neo-Hegelians themselves are forced to admit, though they do not see the significance of the admission) to "hinder hindrances" to social welfare. It can prevent or punish wrong-doing rather than endorse right-doing. It can create for men the external social conditions necessary for the well-being of their lives.'¹ If the State, either in a negative or positive sense, interferes with the form or content of education; if, for example, it seeks to regulate the curriculum or prescribe the method of teaching, the books to be studied, or the school activities, it can—and sometimes does—mortify and paralyse. In England the best-known example of State interference with the curriculum is contained in the clauses of the Education Acts dealing with religious teaching. Their purpose, as we have seen, was not so much to improve the teaching of religion as to allay religious controversy; and they were rendered necessary by what are euphemistically called 'our unhappy divisions.' The Physical Training drive from the centre is an example of intervention of a positive kind with a view to influencing the curriculum, while the implementation of the Hadow Report has involved the State in some dogmatic excursions, including much special pleading to justify making all children change their schools at the age of eleven. Uniformity is no doubt often desirable, but in the government of education—a warm cressive force, as Plato described it—it is necessary to be on our guard against those for whom plans, programmes and patterns have an undue fascination. As Francis Thompson sang:

'There is no expeditious road
To pack and label men for God,
And save them by the barrel-load.'

Change, variety and experiment are constituents of education's life blood, and if they are excluded by external decree paralysis is likely to follow. 'We must change, whether we will or not; if we refuse or are unable to go forward we must slide backwards. If the present is conformed to the past it loses the spontaneity, freshness, reality of that past. Institutional stagnation, if it does not provoke that violence of revolution which is simply the

¹ MacIver: *Community* (Macmillan, 1928 edition), p. 35.

bursting of suppressed and accumulated life, leads either to retrogression or to decadence. The spirit of adaptability is the essential principle not simply of progress but of life itself.¹

Another great advocate of the Community doctrine was Professor George Unwin, and his picture is of a Community comprehending many 'social cohesions,' of which one, namely the State, has the final authority and the sanction of physical force. It is this same viewpoint which has led Sir Ernest Barker and others to attach importance to the development of Community Centres, and to see in them not only a new method of adult education, but also a vital feature of the social organisation of the future. Such thinkers have realised the danger of the gulf which now divides the State from the social life of the community. 'The expansion of England in the seventeenth century,' says Unwin, 'was an expansion of society and not of the State. Society expanded to escape from the pressure of the State.' The hotch-potch of organisations, associations, societies and fellowships, which are now to be found in any populous neighbourhood has little contact with the State and can by a process of frustration or cold-shouldering become a source of instability or, on the other hand, if given a place in the sun, the societies can grow in wisdom and stature and enrich the life of the community. 'Such societies,' to quote Professor Laski, 'are the spontaneous expression of felt needs in the experience of men. And since the life of society is too vast to be capable, even if it were desirable, of government by the State alone, no small part of its direction depends upon them. Indeed, it may be argued that in any society, the richer the variety of group-life, the fuller will be the quality of satisfaction that it obtains.'

The view of the State held by those who believe in a community of free associations is that one of its principal services is as 'an organ of community' and that its function as such is to foster and encourage the right development of the various 'social adhesions.' Indeed, William Temple described the war of 1914-18 as one 'between the idea of the State as essentially Power—Power over its own community and against other communities—and of the State as the organ of community, maintaining its solidarity by law to safeguard the interests of the community.'² Thus he drew a contrast between 'Power-States' and 'Welfare-

¹ MacIver: *Community*, p. 191.

² Temple: *Christianity and the State* (Macmillan, 1928), pp. 169, 170.

States,' and if we regard the Hitler war as a continuance of the previous struggle, the victory which we desire should, if we accept Dr. Temple's view, embrace that of the conception of the State as an instrument not of power but of the well-being of the societies and human associations within and without its borders.¹ What part the State as 'organ of the community' would play in such a civilisation or what influence associations and societies would or should enjoy are matters for speculation; but it is possible to envisage under such auspices the growth of a more generous conception of adult education embracing all the cultural interests of the population. It would be wrong to assume that, in a nation with a strong communal development, the State has only a passive or scheme-making role, for it has to ensure that communities and associations observe the rules of the game. If, for example, grants are made to an Association, it must be somebody's business to ensure that the money is well spent. An association can easily deteriorate and fall from grace; as for example 'when it narrows down its world and sets up nearer frontiers to its thoughts; when it becomes more completely self-enclosed, like the old German guilds that sought vainly to save themselves from a widening civilisation by making their own doors more fast.'² Oxford and Cambridge were, quite apart from the sex-barrier controversy, instances of such door-closing prior to the reforms of the 'fifties and the removal of religious tests in 1871, and the Public Schools to this day are examples of societies rendered narrowly exclusive by their high fees. One justification for their exalted tariff walls has been that they receive no grant or aid from rates or taxes, but that is not a contention likely to find acceptance in the Welfare State which Dr. Temple foreshadowed.

TOWN PLANNING AND EDUCATION

It is curious how little thought was given in the great housing programmes after the last war to facilities for religion, education, recreation and leisure. Houses, and more houses, for heroes was the aim—perhaps rightly, so great was the need—of the Addison régime, and next in consideration to houses came roads and sewers. The Housing Officer and the City Engineer were the officials whose advice was most in demand; and the result was

¹ Temple: *Christianity and the State*, chapters iii and iv, on 'The State in its Internal Relations' and 'The State in its External Relations.'

² MacIver: *Community*, p. 194.

that in the first post-war estates the houses were up and the roads and sewers ready long before social services were reasonably available and before the Churches had a chance of providing for their faithful. In some instances, indeed, it has never been possible to provide adequate educational facilities because the sites allotted for school purposes were much too small, and in those areas in which the intake of new school population was on a large scale the task confronting the Local Education Authority has been stupendous. Housing and town planning have been in the past the concern of that dear Octopus, the Ministry of Health, and the influence of the Board of Education has not been operative until long after the lay-out stage. 'The initiators of these great social experiments were primarily interested in questions of housing and hygiene, and it was perhaps inevitable that they should have overlooked the social and economic corollaries of planting in novel surroundings large aggregations of human beings without any developed sense of corporate unity or civic responsibility, and inadequately provided with those social services to which they were accustomed even under the less hygienic conditions in which they had previously lived.'¹ This disregard of the social needs of the population on the part of housing experts is not of course confined to Great Britain. 'As regards communal services for the housing units,' says Sir E. D. Simon after investigating conditions in Moscow, 'comparatively little is being done. There is generally a club-room, which is so small that it can only be used by a quite limited proportion of the tenants; some sort of wash-house; playgrounds, sand-pits, and a crèche for the children, and often a cheap open-air theatre. But on the whole it all seems rather half-hearted and not very well done.'² If there is virtue in education and culture, there is surely a strong case for Education Authorities to be assigned a pivotal place in all town planning movements, and for the Ministry of Education to be active and influential in the initial stages of all rebuilding schemes. 'A community that does not plan and build the necessary structures for the common life will remain under a perpetual weight and handicap.'³

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD

It is clear that a school must have a relationship, intimate or

¹ *Education in Essex*: Report of the Essex Education Committee, 1935, p. 5.

² *Moscow in the Making* (Longmans, 1937), p. 147.

³ Mumford: *The Culture of Cities*, p. 471 (Secker & Warburg, 1940 edition).

otherwise, with the community which encircles it. Indeed, some go so far as to make the school the pivot of their civic planning, believing it to be the natural centre of the social life of the neighbourhood. Mr. Lewis Mumford, for example, in *The Culture of Cities*, contends that the school should be the social nucleus of the suburb, and urges that the suburb should not be swallowed up in the spreading mass of the city, 'but be small and compact, with a definite cultural and physical identity.' 'In the new city,' he says, 'a neighbourhood has visible definition. Its size is determined by the convenient walking distance for children between the farthest house and the school and playground in which a major part of their activities are focused.' As to the planning of the suburb, he argues that 'its pattern is determined by the need of isolating school and home from the noise of traffic and its dangers'; and he rejects as anti-social large suburbs and large schools: 'creating megalopolitan buildings holding from 1,500 to 3,000 pupils and then expanding the scale of the neighbourhood so that it can bestow a sufficient number of children on these buildings may be dismissed as a typical megalopolitan perversion.' 'A neighbourhood,' he continues, 'should be an area within the scope and interest of a pre-adolescent child; such that daily life can have unity and significance for him, as a representation of the larger social whole.'¹

One of the chief causes of juvenile delinquency is without doubt the amorphous character of city life, and for the adult also there is much frustration in the absence of healthy opportunities for recreation and social intercourse. Such considerations as these lead the community enthusiasts to stress the importance of providing for the citizen young and old a unified social life in his own vicinity. Following Patrick Geddes, some of them speak of the emergence of a new biotechnic society, in which people will be less interested in material and mechanical improvements and more interested in human relationships and such natural occupations as the cultivation of the soil. 'The class education of the past and the narrow vocational education of the passing order are both antagonistic to the biotechnic concept of education as the extension and refinement and integration of human experience in all its manifold aspects. The cultivation of the senses, by visual and tactile explorations of the environment, the intensification and communal refinement of feelings in the group activi-

¹ Lewis Mumford: *The Culture of Cities*, pp. 472, 473.

ties of sport, in the theatre, when the spectator and actor may interchange parts, in the civic festival and religious ritual, above all in the relations of friends, lovers, mates—this is the essential business of life. . . . The active routine and the orderly duties of workshop, factory, farm and office are likewise essential contributions to this education; but so far from education being ordered merely to prepare the pupil for assuming the responsibilities of maturity, it is no less important to order industry so that it will contribute to the maturing educational needs of its members.¹

It may not unreasonably be argued by persons who like to be matter of fact, that this is all theoretical and much too impracticable. The answer would seem to be that already in this country it is in process of being carried out, and that the rebuilding of cities after bombing will provide a remarkable opportunity of planning in such a way that cities shall in future provide a far better social life and a much less bookish education. Indeed, our national well-being depends to some extent upon our ability to adapt our institutions to the changing needs of society. 'Social institutions, including moral rules, are, in general, the result of an adjustment of human relations to the needs of life.'² For over a decade now the Cambridgeshire Authority has pioneered in providing for the communal needs of rural society, and their Village Colleges are an important contribution to the educational tradition created in our time. Similarly, the modern Senior Schools, especially those in the new housing areas, have jumped to the opportunity of making themselves the centre of a more human kind of education both for pupils of school age and for the youth and the adult population of the neighbourhood. Mr. Mumford speaks with appreciation of the way in which schools in English towns and villages are interesting people in their environment. 'Already,' he says of regional surveys by schools, 'such surveys have come to play an important part in English education; indeed, the land utilisation survey, completed recently in England, was carried out through the co-operation of the school children in every locality. Such surveys, if made by specialist investigators alone, would be politically inert; made through the active participation of school children, at an appropriate point in adolescent development, they become a central

¹ Lewis Mumford: *The Culture of Cities*, pp. 473, 474.

² Ginsberg: *Sociology* (H.U.L.), p. 200.

core in a functional education for political life.'¹ The variety of surveys carried out in this way is considerable: soil, climate, plants, animals, birds, industry, geology, history and many other subjects form the basis of co-operative investigation under the leadership of a teacher with expert knowledge and enthusiasm for his subject.

One of our worst educational inheritances has been the sharp division fixed in the Grammar School tradition between school and life, and as a corollary the deeply embedded sentiment that vocation is outside the teacher's ambit. The development of adult education also has tended too much to reflect this cleavage, and we have thought of it usually in the language of those enlightened University dons who first advocated it as a way of bringing the College Tutorial to the people. It seems doubtful whether this somewhat narrow conception of Adult Education can any longer be sustained, or that we can continue to draw a distinction between culture and vocation. 'I am sorry to see,' says Sir Fred Clarke, 'that this fatal dualism has been given further currency just recently in a new form. A distinguished scholar has just published a little book in which he argues, quite truly, that much of our most effective education in the future will have to be adult education. . . . It is the setting in which the writer places this adult activity that alarms me. He recognises that we have to earn a living. But then he puts all that aside and concentrates on the use of spare time which is to be devoted to the acquisition of culture. I note the implication in the book that the culture of the University don and the schoolmaster is, if not the only kind, at least the typical kind. But what I most wish to note is the setting aside of the whole field of work, and with it the evasion of the whole problem.'² One wonders sometimes why it is that we divide education up into these queer compartments, and often one finds the answer in the history of the Board of Education. Technical education—no doubt as a result of the activities of the Science and Art Department before its merging with the Board of Education—still functions as a very separate show, and yet, unless you accept what Sir Fred Clarke calls 'this fatal dualism,' the distinction between technical and adult education in a modern working society is difficult to draw. 'It is

¹ Lewis Mumford: *The Culture of Cities*, p. 384.

² Professor F. Clarke: *Cultural Aspects of Vocational Education* (National Council of Commercial Education, 1941).

inconceivable to me,' says one with an intimate knowledge of the educational needs of workers in a large city, 'that mankind will be content with a life in which there is a little bread labour, a little sport, a little pleasure, and for the rest inglorious loafing. There is a type which will want to express itself in terms of technology, and for that type it is our function to cater in play as in work. The attraction of power, applied to new uses, to new experiments and inventions, to new transformations and manipulations of matter will, I think, give us an influx of students who will value technical education as never before. Having reduced in large measure compulsory labour, there will be a demand from our type for intelligent and voluntary occupation.'¹

If education is to touch the whole life of man and to be a profound influence in social life, it is necessary for schools and their environment to be planned accordingly in close relationship. Schools cannot play their due part in the England of to-morrow unless in all planning the social significance of education and its bearing upon national and civic character are remembered. There is a famous saying of Thomas Aquinas that it is natural to man to pray and to live in communities; it is much easier for him to do both if the setting and environment of his daily life is a help thereto and not a hindrance. A huge amorphous conglomeration of houses, factories, shops and civic buildings does not make for spiritual well-being or social harmony. On the other hand, a city distributed into housing communities of a size in which a friendly social life is possible can provide a life for its people in which work and play, the spiritual and the secular are a harmonious whole. Education in such circumstances permeates and influences in ways that are impossible when schools are large and the area amorphous. 'From the drill school to the organic school; from the child school to the child-adult school; from the desiccated environment to a living environment; from closed issues and mechanical indoctrination to open enquiry and co-operative discipline as a normal process of living—that is one series of steps. From the part-time school confined to a building, to the full-time school taking stock of and taking part in the whole life of the neighbourhood, the city, the region; from an education whose truths and values are in good part denied by the actual environment and the social practice of the community to an education that is integral with the demands and

¹ Wright Robinson: *Technology and the Community* (Association of Technical Institutions, 1936).

possibilities of life and that shirks no needed effort to make over reality in conformity with purpose and ideal. . . . The institutions that are accessory, as it were, to the school are the public library and reading-room, public workshops, studios and laboratories, and public dance-halls and little theatres. In America both the settlement house and the school itself have demonstrated how these various activities may be effectively grouped, often in a single building, for service to the whole population at every age level. Here again, what distinguishes the biotechnic community is not the introduction of any essentially new institutions so much as their adequate organisation and incorporation as an elemental, indispensable part of the whole. Most neighbourhoods, even where public housing has been achieved, lack more than the most rudimentary physical facilities for a good social life.¹

One of the most discreditable features of our social organisation is the way in which we allow children during adolescence to suffer the swift transition from the protective guardianship of school to the uncertain influences of the factory and workshop. The change is too severe and too sudden and must cause much spiritual damage and educational waste. As a remedy of this evil, Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, when Minister of Education, conceived the idea of the compulsory Day Continuation School, but unfortunately an economy blizzard prevented the setting up of these schools, although his Education Act made provision for them. Youth Centres at night, though they serve an excellent purpose, do not solve the problem with which the Day Continuation School was intended to deal. For the aim of the Day Continuation School was to provide a bridge between school and industry, and to prevent that 'dualism' of mind which the sharp transfer from school to industry creates. It is to be hoped that some such provision will come at an early date and that the new Youth College will be closely associated both with industry and the community in which the student resides. For such a school should play an important part in creating a citizenship in which work and play, school and home are interdependent and not opposites.

But let us not be dogmatic on the difficult subject of education and the community; all that is clear is that it is an unsolved problem. In the reconstruction which must inevitably follow the war, we must leave ample room for experiment if we are to find new ways of making our educational provision more responsive

¹ Lewis Mumford: *Culture of Cities*, pp. 476, 477.

to human needs. 'My plea,' says Sir Gwilym Gibbon,¹ discussing whether planning for after the war is practicable, 'is that, all of us, however given we may be towards -isms in planning and other affairs, should regard them, not as visions from heaven, but as an attempt of frail humanity to steer a course through the complexities of life and judge them strictly by the facts of experience, systematically ascertained. We must be realistic and empirical.' Whatever form the planning takes, it will be necessary for education to get to grips in some way with the task of meeting communal needs in town and country; for the demand is immense, especially in populous areas, and until it is satisfied there will be a deep sense of frustration or what is almost worse, a dull acceptance of spurious recreational alternatives. On international grounds, also, the case for a strong social basis in education is overwhelming; the cultivation of a neighbourly spirit in the school, the home, and the wider community around us is the first stage in that lesson of good neighbourliness which must be universally assimilated before the advent of that day foretold by Isaiah when 'nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.' It is strange how few have understood that before a League of Nations can flourish there must be a long and arduous educative process in the art of living together. No one saw this more clearly than did Immanuel Kant, who hammered out his philosophy in an age of stirring events to the consequences of which our twentieth-century wars are directly traceable. Living in the times of Frederick the Great, he witnessed the rise of Prussia and the arrival of Russia as a European Power. It is not surprising therefore that his clear vision perceived that, unless certain antidotes were administered to the people of Europe, calamitous wars and rumours of war were inevitable. His main specific was education, that same remedy which thoughtful men and women are at long last recognising to be the only means of making international co-operation effective. Civilisation, he maintained, was no better than 'a glittering wretchedness,' and would remain such until mankind resolved to climb what he called 'the last ascent.' This last ascent could only be scaled after adequate preparation; there must be, to use Kant's own phrase, 'a long and intensive education of the spirit for all citizens in every country.' It is a magnificent plea for the teaching of neighbourliness by precept and practice.

¹ *Architect and Building News*, July 25th, 1941: article on 'Reconstruction.'

CHAPTER VII

POSTSCRIPT

‘If you want a reform, you will have to fight for it.’

(*Mr. R. A. Butler.*)

THE IMPACT OF WAR

Schools were a first casualty of the second World War. For at noon on August 31st, 1939, evacuation was ordered, and before the actual declaration of war on September 3rd about three-fourths of the child population had been moved under a voluntary scheme from areas classified as ‘vulnerable’ to ‘safe’ districts allotted for their reception.¹ It was a marvellous feat of organisation, carried out swiftly and efficiently without fuss; it captured the headlines and for once teachers and school-children were front-page news. The children, singing their favourite songs as they marched to their entraining stations, carrying their gas-masks and little kit-bags, attracted universal sympathy and admiration. ‘A sight which will remain with me all my life,’ wrote a famous North Country journalist, ‘grit . . . these kids are marvels . . . children to be proud of. They have been grand, but I do not want to see it happen again.’

The consequences of this mass evacuation were mostly harmful in spite of much kindness and goodwill. Schools in reception areas were filled to overflowing, and many of them had to resort to a system of double-shifts in order to accommodate the swarms of evacuees. In London and the great cities and all so-called ‘vulnerable’ areas there was a complete educational black-out, for all except private schools were closed by government order. Worse still, they were occupied by emergency services for every conceivable war-time purpose—mortuaries, first-aid, wardens’ posts, fire stations, and so on; for it was erroneously assumed

¹ There is some uncertainty as to the actual figures, but they were officially stated in January, 1940, as follows:

<i>Class.</i>	<i>Number originally evacuated.</i>	<i>Number returned.</i>	<i>Percentage returned.</i>
Unaccompanied school children ..	734,883	315,192	43
Accompanied children	260,276	223,381	86
Mothers	166,206	145,681	88

(*Hansard, vol. 356, col. 754.*)

that they would not be required for education while the war continued.

The innate individualism of the British matron played a decisive part in spoiling the pattern of the evacuation scheme as conceived in Whitehall. Taking full advantage of its voluntary character, she not only visited her children but she brought them back, sent them out again, or declined to send them at all. Nearly a third were back home within a month, and with their unevacuated comrades they constituted in every city a formidable problem. There ensued a Running Wild phase, when children adventurously roamed the streets while their schools were closed by government decree. For a short while an attempt was made to organise a system of home tuition, but eventually the government capitulated to reality and on November 1st, 1939, authorised the reopening of the schools as soon as adequate air-raid shelters had been provided, a proviso that with labour and materials scarce necessarily involved a continuance of closure for another four or five months. During this time there was a rapid social deterioration, and in the complete absence of an education service child life in our cities reverted almost to pre-1870 conditions.¹

The restoration of decent standards of education was much hindered by various war-time limitations. Staffing both numerically and qualitatively became a problem of increasing difficulty, while new war-time demands added to the strain especially as these often extended to vacations. Large classes became the rule, and in most schools the curriculum had to be adjusted over and over again to meet the changing staffing situation. In some areas the situation worsened when bombing began, and teachers and children had to get used to battle-scarred classrooms and borrowed premises.

As the war proceeded schools became increasingly drab and dusty. Caretakers and cleaners were called up, and painters and decorators were rarely seen. Much extra use of school premises accelerated wear and tear, while in a bombed environment there was much additional dirt, dust and damage. Iron railings were requisitioned to make guns, and playing fields in populous areas, deprived of this protection, were trampled upon and criss-crossed by footpaths. A praiseworthy effort to multiply

¹ For an excellent account of war-time education see *Education in Transition*, by H. C. Dent (Kegan Paul).

the provision of school dinners in spite of the absence of dining accommodation led to the invasion of school halls and even classrooms at midday with pots, pans, plates and cutlery, and this somewhat greasy intrusion was made worse by the daily distribution of innumerable flasks of milk. Countless sacks of salvage were also collected, and many schools responsive to national appeals, accumulated quantities of paper, rags and even bones.

Much else happened to make school in war-time rather a dreary business, but it would be altogether wrong to convey an impression of gloom or over-strain, for cheerfulness was always there to dispel the sombre clouds. A resolute spirit and a determination to make the best of things continued right through the war, and was as noticeable among teachers and children evacuated from 'Southern England' during the closing stages of the war, when the flying bomb was giving trouble, as it was during the first evacuation when no one knew what perils lay ahead. In the early days of the war we were advised how to deal with nervy children during air raids and special provision was made for the speedy evacuation of those unable to stand the strain. There were, however, few signs of nerves, and the stoic realism of children when guns were crashing and bombs falling was perhaps the only pleasant surprise that gladdened parents during the grim months. An anthology compiled from the pages of school magazines of the period would reveal many examples of tough humour, and show how the alarms and excursions of nocturnal shelterdom were converted into excellent juvenile copy. One of the British characteristics which most impressed our numerous foreign visitors during the war was the delightful naturalness of our children and their eager responsiveness in conversation. It may be that we owe this to the easy discipline of our schools during the period between the wars, and it is not unlikely that to the same cause the freedom from fear displayed by children in the presence of danger is also attributable. Certainly their confidence in their teachers helped greatly in the process of evacuation, as it did when it was necessary to take cover during school hours.

THE LESSONS OF EVACUATION

War has been likened to a stern schoolmaster because it teaches us by its very ruthlessness lessons which we refuse to learn in

times of peace. The great upheaval caused by evacuation certainly brought us face to face with a number of urgent questions which had long existed but had been consistently ignored. The sudden arrival of so many evacuees into countless homes set people talking about educational and social problems with a realism hitherto unknown, and because the war was slow in developing in a military sense—people spoke of it in its early stages as a phoney war—attention was riveted upon evacuation as a principal ingredient of the war news. Each half of Britain began to realise in the most practical manner possible how the other half lived; town and country intermixed as never before, and there was a great mingling of the various strata of our queer social structure. For the Podsnaps it was a period of discovery unequalled since the days of Columbus: the newspapers of the time are full of their correspondence manifesting their chagrin at no longer being able to say with the same conviction as before, 'There is not a country in the world, sir, where so noble a provision is made for the poor.' It would be interesting to know how many of these comfortable critics knew what proportion of the houses in congested areas are without baths or washing facilities; if they had they might have helped to rectify a minor scandal. Paper was more plentiful in the earlier stages of the war than it was later, and a considerable evacuation literature developed, including some excellent surveys, which afford a good picture of the problems which householders, teachers, and the local authorities had to tackle.¹

One great truth reaffirmed by the story of evacuation was that the countryside is good for body and soul, and that it is unnatural for so many of us to be brought up solely in urban surroundings. There is nothing new in this belief, for it is at least as old as Antaeus who, it will be remembered, revived his strength by touching Mother Earth. It seems likely that after the war there will be a determined attempt to ensure for all town children a regular opportunity for such a renewal and that as a result of the experience of evacuation there will be a general provision of camp schools and also a certain amount of temporary boarding-out in country districts. For evacuation proved not only the value of the communal life of the rural camp school but also showed what

¹ For bibliographies of Evacuation literature, see *The Cambridge Evacuation Survey*, edited by Susan Isaacs and published by Methuen (1941), pp. 229-31, and *Evacuation in Scotland*, edited by William Boyd and published by University of London Press (1944), pp. xv and xvi.

excellent results can accrue when town children live for a period in suitable country homes.

Shortly before the war Parliament agreed to legislation authorising the expenditure of £1,200,000 on the erection and maintenance of camps of a semi-permanent type. With this money the National Camps Corporation for England and Wales built thirty-one camps, and the Scottish Special Housing Association, whose share was £168,000, built five camps. The camps, though not designed for ordinary school purposes, were made available as residential schools under the evacuation arrangements, and as such they proved of undoubted value. It was inevitably difficult to staff them adequately in war-time, but in spite of this they were a great success, except in one respect. The Camp trustees were, through a local manager, responsible for the management of the Camp and the commissariat, while the evacuating authority was responsible, through the head master or head mistress, for the control and organisation of the school.¹ Fortunately that is a dichotomy that can easily be avoided in any permanent arrangement and we can therefore look forward confidently to the Camp School as a valuable feature of post-war development. The usefulness of small residential schools for children requiring special attention was also abundantly proved: and it is difficult to believe that we shall not in future resort extensively to this method, costly though it is, for dealing with certain groups of children: e.g. the problem child, the backward, and the anti-social child, who unless taken in hand early becomes a very unsatisfactory and expensive citizen.

But the most far-reaching consequence of evacuation was the impression left on the public mind that our children have nothing like an even chance in the opening stages of the battle of life: and this tended to focus attention on the glaring inequalities of our educational provision. The contrasts in our social structure were demonstrated forcibly when evacuees entered homes very different in terms of amenities and comfort from those which they had left, and it was also realised as never before how far we are from having resolved some of the worst social and educational problems bequeathed to us from the days of the industrial revolution. This gave an impetus to the crusade for nursery education, for it was realised that without it children from indifferent homes

¹ See *Evacuation in Scotland*, pp. 161 and 162, where it is shown how dual control proved a serious weakness both in England and Scotland.

have an extremely difficult start in life. The development of special nurseries to take care of the babies of women war workers, costly though they were, still further demonstrated the value of child care, and made sure that the nursery school and class would receive attention in any new legislation. Questions of clothing and footwear were also brought to the front by evacuation and war-time conditions, and it was at long last appreciated that many children suffer severe hardships from having to attend school ill-clad and without satisfactory footwear. Evacuation and war-time circumstances brought out in a most effective way the interdependence of education and society; they made it evident that school is not just a place in which subjects are taught, and that it can function in co-operation with the home as the guardian of the nation's childhood.

THE DECLINE OF HOME INFLUENCE

The problem of education in war-time has been much aggravated by the relaxation, and in some instances the complete breakdown, of home discipline; the absence of father in H.M. Forces and mother in full or part-time employment has been bad for family life. As a result public attention, missing its influence, has been directed as never before to the social significance of the home, and to the desirability of restoring and strengthening family bonds. 'The family as a social unit must be safeguarded,' declared the leaders of the churches in a manifesto entitled *A Christian Basis for Peace*, issued at Christmastide, 1940, and in this they were in line with a view already expressed in a papal encyclical on the subject of education. 'In order to obtain education,' His Holiness declares, 'it is of the utmost importance to see that all those conditions which surround the child during the period of his formation, in other words, that the combination of circumstances which we call environment correspond exactly to the end proposed. The first natural and necessary element in this environment is the family, and this precisely because so ordained by the Creator Himself. Accordingly, that education, as a rule, will be more effective and lasting which is received in a well-ordered and well-disciplined family; and more efficacious in proportion to the clear and constant good example set, first by the parents, and then by other members of the household.'

The problem of the home is perhaps the most difficult we have to solve; it lies at the root of the whole business of education.

The revolt against Victorian restrictions has emancipated the young from many irksome taboos, and freed them from the misery of suppressive domination by parents and elder relatives. A play like Stanley Houghton's *Younger Generation*, so relevant at the dawn of the century, has become a period piece, for only the grey-haired playgoer remembers the firm and sometimes hypocritical discipline of nineteenth-century households. Having dethroned the Victorian parent, we have not decided what part his heirs and assigns should play; we have built schools, nurseries, houses and flats without attempting to determine what share of the educative function should be apportioned to each. With humanitarian zeal we have done everything possible for the unwanted children of feckless fathers and mothers, and yet at the same time we have bemoaned the readiness of parents to unload their responsibility upon the State. Our juvenile courts, remand homes and approved schools have been packed with children, whose parents have escaped scot-free, as though it were quite wrong to visit the sins of the children upon the fathers of the first generation. So far the problem of co-operation between school and home seems to have been best solved by sympathetic and high-minded infants' and nursery teachers who, while doing much for the children committed to their care, have sought to make their school a centre at which mothers also are encouraged to interest themselves in aspects of child nurture and are helped to realise how much and in what ways home-training matters.

THE PARENT IN ANCIENT ROME

A symptom of the decline of home life is the fact that at no time in our history has Ancient Rome counted for so little in our educational outlook. 'The claim of any period in Roman history to a place amongst the great ages of civilization,' says Clive Bell, voicing the antipathy of the nineteen-twenties, 'is certain to meet nowadays with fervent and effective opposition.'¹ For citizens of a great Commonwealth there are important lessons to learn from Rome, and it may be that we would be wise to pay more heed to the great character-training qualities of Roman education, the basis of which was the home. 'To me,' Lord Baldwin once said, 'the outstanding and peculiar strength of the Roman character lies in the words *pietas* and *gravitas*. These were the foundations of a patriotism which alone could carry the burden of Empire, a

¹ Clive Bell: *Civilization* (Penguin), p. 45.

patriotism innate, a motive force of incalculable power, yet something at its best so holy that it was never paraded, sought no reward, was taken for granted and had no single word to express it.¹

During her first five centuries, until in fact she absorbed Greek culture and Greek conceptions of education, Rome largely relied upon parents to provide what she regarded as the essentials of education, namely character training, healthy upbringing and a grounding in the civic traditions. 'If a boy grew up healthy and strong in mind and body, if he revered the gods, his parents and the laws and institutions of his country, if he was familiar with the traditional methods of agriculture, and had some knowledge of the way of conducting public business in times of peace and serving in the field in time of war; if a girl learnt from her mother to be modest, virtuous, and industrious, skilled in the duties of the household, this was all that was needed, that children should grow up what their parents would have them to be. There was no conception of, still less any desire for, any system of progressive culture. The usage of their ancestors (*mos majorum*) set the standard at which the Romans aimed. What had been good enough for the fathers was good enough for the sons. It was the severest censure to say of a man that he had acted as his fathers would not have done (*contra morem majorum*). And to maintain this tradition of conduct no system of teaching by outsiders was needed or desired; the discipline of the home could do all that was required. With the methods adopted the State did not in any way concern itself. Indirectly it did much to hold up a high standard of civic duty and devotion. But the manner in which this was taught was left to the individual citizen. It has been noted as something of a paradox that while the Greeks were always disposed to look with favour on the interference of the State in questions of training and education, they never secured the same devotion and obedience to the State as were shown at Rome, where the lessons of patriotism were learnt in the home.'²

This is a point of view which, though it is far removed from modern opinion, is worth thinking about, and it is well to remember that the Roman father in training his sons contrived to combine with a fairly grim severity a large measure of paternal affection. Old Cato's reverence for the young made him declare that

¹ *On England* (Philip Allan, 1927 edition), p. 104.

² Wilkins: *Roman Education* (C.U.P.), p. 2.

in their presence 'disgraceful language is no less to be avoided than if the Sacred Virgins were present'; but he also saw that they went through a tough apprenticeship to life and learnt to 'endure both heat and cold, and to swim over the most rapid and rough rivers.' This rigorous home discipline, for which the Romans were famous, provided a model which was copied here, especially in the country-house tradition, and has had a considerable influence in the past upon home training in this country. 'The old Lord Gray,' writes Henry Peacham, a seventeenth-century schoolmaster, 'when hee was Deputie of Ireland, to inure his sonnes for the warre, would usually in the depths of Winter, in frost, snow, raine and what weather soever fell, cause them at midnight to be raised out of their beds, and carried abroad on hunting till the next morning.'¹ It seems likely that the next decade will witness a prolonged tug-of-war between those who favour the indulgent régime that obtained between the wars and those who, in war-time having seen the consequences of the lack of parental control, advocate a reversion to a more definite discipline. What matters more, however, is a renewed sense of responsibility on the part of parents, and an effort by those concerned to arouse parental interest in child upbringing. Equally important are such remedies as better homes, nearer playing pitches, and a suitable community life for both adults and children. Parks and green belts, admirable though they are, are not an adequate substitute for the little playing piece or 'croft' within sight of the house.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

It is not severity that is wanted in the home, but a truer appreciation of how *Homo sapiens* should be treated during childhood and adolescence. 'If one can judge from the books of old-fashioned disciplinarians,' says Mr. Bertrand Russell, 'the children educated by the old methods were far naughtier than the modern child. I should certainly be horrified if my boy were half as badly behaved as the children in *The Fairchild Family*; but I should think that the fault lay more with his parents than with himself. I believe that reasonable parents create reasonable children.'² The hours of childhood spent in and about the home greatly outnumber those spent in school, and can hardly fail to be,

¹ Rowland: *A Pedagogue's Common-place Book* (Dent, 1925), p. 192.

² *On Education* (Allen & Unwin, 1930 edition), p. 135.

for good or evil, of overwhelming importance to each individual. For some they are hours of misery or boredom, leaving their impress in the form of complexes, obsessions and inhibitions; for others, they bring much happiness and provide little stores of sunshine which radiate through life. 'It was not,' says Kinglake in his *Eothen*, 'the recollection of school nor college learning, but the rapturous and earnest reading of my childhood, which made me bend forward so longingly to the plains of Troy.'

The attitude of parents and other members of the family during one's childhood is as much a part of one's education as any aspect of school life; the power which our family system places in the hands of the father or mother is, as Mr. Bernard Shaw demonstrates in his famous *Treatise on Parents and Children*, greater than that assumed by any dictator.¹ For that reason the co-operation of the parent with the school is vital; nor should Parents' Associations and similar efforts to strengthen and improve home life be confined to humble neighbourhoods; it is odd how persistently the settlements and the social workers concentrate upon the Bethnal Greens and forget the needs of the May-fairs. Experience shows that the well-to-do provide their full quota of bored and indifferent parents, and that probably more divided homes—a principal cause of delinquency—are to be found among the rich than among the poor. 'There are,' says a former head mistress of a famous and exclusive school, 'times when every schoolmistress has pangs of disappointment, and the parents, I confess, are often responsible for these. It seemed to me incredible that a child could be at school for six or seven years, receive care and sympathy, and belong to us for the greater part of the year, and that on leaving no word should come from those to whom we rendered an account of our stewardship in the child we returned to them.'²

THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF THE SMALL COMMUNITY

A compact housing estate or a village can, if facilities for meetings large and small exist, have a fairly intimate communal life; and in such an environment collaboration between home and school can become a natural feature of a decent social tradition. A small community within a city can enjoy the double advantages

¹ Published with *Misalliance* (Constable).

² Lilian M. Faithfull: *In the House of My Pilgrimage* (Chatto & Windus), pp. 211-12.

of the cultural amenities of a large civic centre and the intimate social life of a small well-planned township. Thus, as well as its wider civic patriotism, it can acquire locally what psychologists have called a group mind, and it is this collective wisdom or local tradition which, when it is a reality, helps to maintain a standard of conduct to which all but the exceptional and abnormal conform. This assists in the upbringing of children, and it is of special value in the training of youth, for it is a natural preventive of juvenile crime and loutish hooliganism. In such an environment the family plays a more active and social part than it does in the anonymous life of the amorphous town; it regains the significance which it enjoys in the life of a settled village or in such a homogeneous organisation as a Jewish community. If the view be accepted that the family is or should be an educative institution and that home and school are complementary, it becomes our duty to do everything possible to enrich and ennoble home life. Much depends upon the planning of houses and the layout of dormitory estates, and much hinges also upon the churches and the schools. It is important to get parents to understand that school does not diminish the educative function of the home; Robert Burns's picture of the 'Cottar's Saturday Night' is an illustration of paternal training such as the Romans would have applauded:

'The chearfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
The big ha'-Bible, ance his father's pride.
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales a portion with judicious care,
And "Let us worship God!" he says, with solemn air.'

AN EXPANSION OF ADULT EDUCATION

It looks as if a principal task of the post-war generation will be that of bridging the gulf, partly imaginary, partly real, between school and people. How this can best be done is by no means clear, but it looks as if we shall have to forge a new administrative technique, designed to bring the local community into closer touch with the service of education. A wide expansion of adult education will also assist in personalising our democracy and

bringing it into closer association with the world of education. During the war years there has been a growing realisation of the great part which adult education could play in our national life, and there has been much support for the view admirably expounded by Sir Richard Livingstone that for the study of human ideals and achievement the young, because they lack experience, are neither adequately or suitably equipped. So there has grown a demand for Residential Colleges and local centres for adult study, and this has been strengthened by knowledge of the lectures and discussions organised for the services, by the development of A.B.C.A., and the success of C.E.M.A. Magnificent work in this field has been accomplished in past years by the Universities, the Local Authorities, and the Workers' Education Association; and institutes, village colleges, community centres and settlements all provide evidence of the way in which adult education in the widest sense—tutorials, drama, music, art, crafts, library, debates, housewife classes and much else—can be made the basis of a friendly communal life. The signpost points clearly in the direction of a considerable expansion of such facilities during the post-war years.

THE NEED FOR ENSURING PARENTAL CO-OPERATION

This encouraging growth of adult education suggests that all that is necessary to make us a nation of friendly communities is to provide appropriate facilities for a neighbourly life and to develop a strong communal bias in our post-war educational programmes. What seems also to be required if we are to win the active support of parents in the task of educating their children, is a subtle change in our normal educational philosophy. It has been our habit to accept too readily the view which Pestalozzi makes Gertrud express, namely: 'You should do for the children what their parents fail to do for them.' It rather looks as if we must do a good deal more than that, and make it our specific and constant business, difficult though it will sometimes be, to awaken parents and the community around the school to the importance of child and youth welfare. 'Co-operation with parents is essential if for no other reason than because the alternative is ousting the parents, and doing by means of the school many things which in simpler times were done by the home. The dangers of that are obvious, being mainly two: the danger of weakening the feeling of responsibility which all parents ought to

experience, and thus replacing a very stable and certain, if nowadays somewhat inefficient, means of education (the home) by an efficient but easily destroyed means (the school), which in times of trouble, war, or political unrest might fail us; and the danger of creating as sole means of education a closely organised institution which might be captured by some propagandist body, and used for its own ends, contrary to the wishes of the parents, who may be ignorant of what is going on. The advance in complexity and division of labour in our society has made education by the parents alone impossible, but care should always be taken to co-operate with them, who are a definite body in the community.¹ Such collaboration becomes a much more natural and stable process when the school is not too large and is closely associated with the life of a compact neighbourhood clustered near its gates.

A SQUARE DEAL FOR THE YOUNG WORKER

Mr. Ernest Bevin, as war-time Minister of Labour, has declared that in his opinion 'the treatment of the adolescent is the weakest part of our educational system.' As the Minister responsible for mobilising our man-power during the war, nothing, he asserted, stood out in his memory more than his realisation of the way in which we had wasted the potential skill of our youth between the two wars. 'In the attempt,' he said, 'to adjust our economic life to what were regarded as financial requirements we damaged irretrievably one of the greatest assets this nation had, an asset of special value when you have regard to the fact that if Britain is to survive as a great industrial nation, her survival must depend largely upon the skill and technical ability of her people.'

Youth was deliberately sacrificed in the period between the wars, in two great economy drives, the Geddes Axe and the crisis of 1931; the White Paper entitled *Reductions in National Expenditure* issued in 1931 makes strange reading to-day, for it imposes two major cuts, one in Unemployment Insurance and the other in Education, amounting in the latter case to £10,500,000.

This neglect of youth will probably astonish the social historian when he comes to write about us, and we may figure in his pages as rather callous people. It is odd how man's inhumanity seems to express itself in different ways through the ages. We

¹ Godfrey H. Thomson: *A Modern Philosophy of Education* (Allen & Unwin, 1929), p. 45.

who are shocked at the way complacent early Victorians treated chimney-boys have been quite content to see boys and girls pitchforked from the seclusion of school into the competitive struggle of the industrial market. We talk learnedly about education and psychology, and yet we let youth step from school into industry without any effective attempt to build a bridge.

Educator and industrialist, with a few shining exceptions, have never got together to humanise the transition from the sheltered atmosphere of school into the rigorous competitive life of mill, factory and warehouse. Yet clearly it is of the utmost importance that the first industrial years should be years of adjustment carefully related to what has taken place in school, and the leaving year at school should be mainly a preparation for the post-school life. The physical needs during this transition are more easy to determine than their social and spiritual counterparts. It is clearly important that the health of the adolescent worker should receive as regular attention as during schooldays, that milk and canteen meals should continue to be available, and that working conditions should be as wholesome as possible. For example, care should be taken to ensure that machinery and processes are designed with due regard to health, physique and posture.

The greatest reform of all, however, would be to get it clearly understood that at any rate up to eighteen the young worker is still in training and serving an apprenticeship to life. 'I suggest,' to quote the war-time Minister of Labour again, 'that industry must not regard the adolescent as a profit-making factor. It ought to recognise that the great producing age of the human being, upon which its economy must be based, must be the years from eighteen onwards, and that the period below that age must be virtually regarded as the school or training period.' Mr. Bevin argues cogently from his experience that it would be wise national economy thus to regard the young worker as a trainee, and he makes the additional point that if we took trouble over the upbringing of our youth we should gain greatly in social discipline. 'I am sure,' he says, 'it is far more important than the corrective steps that have been taken for juvenile delinquency, and if the conception is held that the State and the parent do not lose hold of the adolescent until he is eighteen or even older, his school certificate, his training, his accomplishments and all the other things that go to influence his mind will have a tremendous and meritorious effect on his conduct and his approach to adult life.'

YOUTH AND INDUSTRY

Youth is going to be scarcer than ever before in our history. In other days the young boy or girl leaving school had to enter a buyer's market; in post-war Britain he or she will be much sought after in a seller's market. Juvenile Employment Bureaux will become a most important placing service, especially in areas where there is a reasonable measure of alternative employment; and the Ministry of Labour, in anticipation of this, has already declared that it will not regard employment as satisfactory 'unless the management is actively conscious of its responsibility for the future of the boys and girls whom it employs.'

Industry can hardly afford to ignore this new significance of choice of employment, for in many places juveniles will have unprecedented opportunities of selecting their occupations. Six years ago there were 3,250,000 boys and girls between 14 and 18 years of age in Great Britain. To-day the number is about 2,750,000. In 13 years' time it is calculated that the number will have fallen to two and a half million. But even that is a mythical figure because the number available for employment will be reduced as the school-leaving age is raised, and will indeed be halved if it is raised to sixteen. Another important factor is the anticipated strong demand for labour, when trade and commerce and reconstruction get busy after the war. If the demand is strong and the supply is short, is it not almost certain that the quality of youth will begin to matter in places where quantity has been the main consideration in the past? Already there are many indications of a new interest on the part of industries which have been apathetic hitherto about the training and recruitment of new entrants, and it is not impossible that we shall witness a veritable scramble for youth.

Necessarily the problem differs with environment and conditions, but in populous areas it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that such a world is too crowded, too vast and too anonymous for youth to grow up in it easily, and the industrial tasks which lads and lasses have to perform are often very mechanical and monotonous. All that is not good for soul, mind or body, and while trying to improve our industrial environment we have got to provide some antidote to such an unnatural life. There is a fifth freedom which matters much to young people growing up, namely freedom from boredom; Dr. Mannheim personifies what

he regards as the major problem of our age by saying that we are at war with an adversary 'whose glaring shadow looms large all over our world.' He calls this enemy 'Mechanised Barbarism,' and the problem of the young worker is a vital part of this struggle.

It is a struggle against the effects of mechanisation, and against a crude material life in which much that matters most is crowded out by monotonous employment and uninspiring amusement. In the crusade against mechanised barbarism reconstruction can play a big part; it can provide us with county colleges, better factories, and well-built housing neighbourhoods. All these should help very much to make the life of our young people more sensible and interesting; but we would be wise not to underrate the enemy; better, perhaps, to overestimate his cunning and pertinacity. Martin Luther, you will remember, likened this world to an Inn in which the Devil is landlord, and Worldliness landlady; his servants are all kinds of evil passions. Rather a monkish picture of the world, perhaps, but not an unrecognisable likeness.

We must be careful in a world so full of shocks and surprises not to expect too much from planning; a blue-print is an excellent device for making a machine, but not for shaping human beings. Much more is necessary if the young worker is to have a chance of a decent life. What we have got somehow to ensure is that the best in civilisation, restored, preserved and enhanced, is passed on to our youth. 'What is civilisation?' asks Mr. Herbert Agar. 'It is a set of rules by which most men abide, of promises to which most men adhere. It is a set of institutions, of homely customs, which express the experience of centuries. It has its roots in cultural disciplines, religious and humanistic, which give life its meaning. Man creates these disciplines, and supports them, to foster what is good in his nature and control what is bad.'¹ The teacher is the principal guardian of this civilisation—this law of nature—and its transmission and enrichment depend largely upon his or her influence. Much hinges, therefore, upon the quality of the men and women who, during the coming years, choose teaching and the guidance of youth as their vocation.

WAR-TIME OPINION

It is odd how men's thoughts so often turn in war-time to a

¹ *A Time for Greatness* (Guild Book), p. 33.

contemplation of a better way of life for the coming generation; 1870, 1902, 1918 and now 1944 are key dates both in the history of war and the history of education. There is a pathos about this rebound from the savagery of battle; bankrupt humanity turns desperately to the future with its ray of hope and tries to console itself with visions of a new dawn. The paramount weakness of war-time planning, however, is that while it may enshrine the aspirations and wisdom of age and middle-age, it lacks entirely the zest and ruthlessness of youth. Indeed it can hardly be claimed that the blue-prints reflect always the concentrated opinion of the experienced; for leaders are few and they are in time of war largely occupied by urgent emergency tasks with the result that the burden of reconstructive thinking is apt to fall on 'A' teams, themselves often wearied by other calls upon them. Youth is entirely absent from these deliberations, either away in the fighting services or in the factory or the mine, and it will not be unnatural if later it feels that kind of holy wrath which agitated Lawrence of Arabia after the First World War when he spoke with indignation of 'the old men' who came along and rebuilt the universe after the familiar pattern they knew so well. In spite however of all these obstacles and limitations, it is necessary for war-time planning to proceed; a nihilist approach to the future would result only in chaos, and we can be truly grateful therefore, while we remember their shortcomings, for all honest programmes and disinterested efforts to find an educational philosophy appropriate to the coming years. Indeed it may be well sometimes for us to look even beyond the legislation of to-day, and for the sake of perspective attempt some estimate of the issues likely to engage the attention of the post-war generation. One guess is perhaps as good as another, and let us venture the opinion that in shaping the new educational order the leaders of to-morrow will find themselves discussing especially such ancient and fundamental issues as religion, equality and liberty.

THE CHURCH MILITANT

War-time opinion ranged anxiously over such broad fields of enquiry, and the tentative conclusions reached had a great influence on the legislation ultimately framed. Of the historic claimants to a place in the educational sun, the Churches were the first to assert themselves, and as early as Christmas, 1940, the two Anglican Archbishops, the Archbishop of Westminster, and

the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council formulated 'A Christian Basis for Peace', which included pronouncements with a direct bearing upon educational policy: e.g. (a) extreme inequality of wealth condemned, (b) equality of educational opportunity urged, (c) the family as a social unit to be safeguarded, and (d) the sense of Divine vocation to be restored to daily work. In January, 1941, Archbishop Temple presided over a conference of Anglicans at Malvern, which drew up a series of propositions for discussion and 'definite Christian action.'¹ It supported the Christmas declaration, and dealing specifically with education affirmed the following principles: (i) all children and adolescents should have the educational opportunities best suited for their development and for Christian citizenship; (ii) all children to have 'effective Christian teaching given by teachers desiring and competent to give it' (the absence of reference to parental wishes may or may not be significant; while the criterion of competence is not indicated); (iii) the curriculum and the school society should be such as to encourage development of personality—body, mind, spirit—in due proportion; (iv) tutorial classes in religion for parents and teachers in every parish; (v) the neglect of adolescents should cease, and the school-leaving age should be raised to sixteen; and (vi) the Church should take its full share in the development of education.

One episode is, perhaps, worth recording, because it brings most of the traditional claimants on to the stage and shows that the ancient rivalries, though possibly mellowed by age, had not gone into permanent retirement. In the summer of 1941 Mr. R. A. Butler was appointed President of the Board of Education, and a small deputation of Anglicans, including the Archbishops, and Free Churchmen visited him to state their views on the subject of religious teaching. Their proposals were along the following lines: (a) a Christian education for all, subject to a conscience clause, (b) more definite encouragement of religious studies in the conditions of the Teacher's Certificate; (c) abolition of the clause which required Scripture to be taught only at the beginning or end of a session; (d) inspection of religious teaching by H.M. Inspector; (e) opening of school with worship. The new President gave a sympathetic but distinctly cautious reply, which

¹ *Malvern*, 1941 (Longmans). See also a leaflet about the Conference, *The Life of the Church and the Order of Society* (published by Industrial Christian Fellowship). Archbishop Temple's death in October, 1944, was a tragic blow to the cause of education.

earned the commendation of the *Schoolmaster*. 'We hope,' that vigilant journal declared, 'the President's reply will serve as a useful reminder to the very distinguished members of the Archbishop's deputation that the Council Schools of the country belong to the nation, that the people responsible for their administration are the Local Authorities, and that any arrangements made with regard to religious instruction have to be carried out by teachers. Mr. Butler's insistence upon the necessity for consultation with representatives of the Local Authorities and the teachers before arriving at any settled conclusion is as welcome as his statement that if changes in the law should prove to be necessary, the appropriate time for them to be made will be when educational legislation in general comes under review.'¹

Throughout the war years there was much stocktaking in religious circles, and in spite of a good deal of pessimism there was an earnest attempt made to reaffirm the Christian basis of our social life. The war was viewed as a symptom rather than a cause, and it was felt that society had to be remoulded upon a religious basis if we were to rid our civilisation of the deep-seated maladies which were threatening its ruin. Hence such influential movements as that of *The Christian News-Letter*, in which Anglicans and Free Churchmen collaborated, and that of *The Sword of the Spirit* which had a strong Catholic outlook. It was felt by many religious leaders that in education rested the key to the future, and that by inculcating Christian principles in school and among the youth of the country lay the best hope of creating a society anchored to faith. Those who thought upon these lines had their eyes as much on the past as on the prospect of a new order, their aim being to create a bridge between the old civilisation and the new. 'There is no justification,' they argued, '(and much risk) in any mode of thought that makes the tension between the old and new more severe than it need be. The English tradition is far from being exhausted and is of such a nature as to be indefinitely adaptable without ceasing to be itself. The form of the task is to rethink and reinterpret what we have, rather than to think out something entirely new.'² Hellenism came to the support of Christianity through the medium of Sir Richard Livingstone, who in books that were a delight to read,

¹ *The Schoolmaster*, August 21st, 1941.

² Sir Fred Clarke, *Education and Social Change* (*Christian News-Letter* Books: Sheldon Press), pp. v, vi.

made out a strong case both for Adult Education and also for a return to lost educational ideals. 'Suddenly and somehow,' he contended, 'the whole bottom has fallen out of our civilisation, and a change come over the world, which, if unchecked, will transform it for generations. It is the death, or deathlike swoon of Christianity . . . , and also of the moral and religious ideas with which Greek and Christian thinkers tamed barbarism.'¹

THE HIGHWAY AND THE LADDER

Much of the reconstructive planning of education derived its principal stimulus from a notable observation made by Mr. Winston Churchill when, as a good Harrovian, he visited his old school shortly after he became Prime Minister. 'When the war is won,' he declared, 'it must be one of our aims to work to establish a state of society where the advantages and privileges which hitherto have been enjoyed only by the few shall be far more widely shared by the men and youth of the nation as a whole.' Evacuation had drawn attention to amazing contrasts in the ways of bringing up children and had introduced into comfortable homes waifs whose life had been nothing but struggle since the day they were born—bad home, crowded school, no playing-field. The conscience of the nation revolted against such injustice, and there was a strong feeling that a drastic evening-up of opportunity was an urgent need.

In spite of our scholarship ladders and highways, it is still none too easy for a child from a poor English home to rise above what Sir Spencer Walpole called 'his inevitable and hereditary lot'; and surveys, like the admirable *Social Survey of Merseyside*, show how far short we are yet from having provided all children with an equal opportunity. 'The educational ladder,' to quote Mr. Caradog Jones and his Merseyside colleagues, 'is not so broad as is commonly supposed, nor is it so easily climbed. A child requires unusual ability and will-power to study for examinations under the cramped conditions which prevail in many working-class homes. Great self-sacrifice is demanded also from parents if they are to maintain their children at school beyond the age of sixteen, and then for the further period of training after leaving school which is nearly always essential for those who desire to enter the higher-grade occupations. Moreover, our

¹ Sir Richard Livingstone, *The Future in Education*, p. 110 (C.U.P., 1941). See also his *Education for a World Adrift* (C.U.P., 1943).

figures indicate, what is not commonly realised, that in fact barely half those who receive free education in Secondary Schools come from working-class homes. And, when we enquire where free secondary education leads, we discover that decidedly more than half the total scholarship holders in this area, whatever their class, subsequently enter minor commercial occupations.¹

It was perhaps natural during a war fought in the name of democracy that equality should be the theme of many war-time discussions about education, and this in spite of the fact that it was generally recognised to be an unattainable ideal. At first, attention was principally directed to the Public Schools partly because there had been a good deal of pre-war talk about the old school tie and partly because it was widely believed that unless they received financial aid few of them would survive the economic shock of war. In characteristically English fashion all the various arguments about equality in education concentrated on practical issues; and although it was a subject that lent itself to abstract philosophising, that was not the way in which war-time Britain approached it. As to the Public Schools, the questions discussed were—What part were these few influential schools to play in a post-war democracy? If they sought financial aid, upon what conditions should they receive it? Was there real educational value in the boarding-school tradition? If so, why should not all likely to benefit from it have a chance of sharing in it?²

As discussions proceeded, the Public School issue assumed less importance because it was realised that there were other road blocks on the egalitarian line of advance which affected much larger numbers and had more far-reaching consequences. Perhaps the most difficult problem was that created by the inability of the Voluntary Schools to bear the financial burden of modern requirements, for it sometimes placed the children attending them under serious disadvantages. Out of 753 schools 'black-listed' in 1925 by the Board of Education because of seriously

¹ University of Liverpool: *Social Survey of Merseyside No. 5: Social Factors in Secondary Education*, p. 29.

² See Worsley: *The End of the Old School Tie* (Secker & Warburg, 1941); Wootton: *End Social Inequality*; Partridge: *Freedom in Education* (Faber & Faber, 1943); Simon: *The Four Freedoms in Secondary Education* (University of London Press, 1944); and for the views of Public School Head Masters: *Public Schools and the Future* (Head Masters' Conference, 1943); and for a brilliant exposition of the more democratic standpoint, Tawney: *The Problem of the Public Schools* (W.E.A., 1944).

defective premises, 541 were Voluntary Schools; and for the same reason, namely lack of funds, the proportion of Voluntary Schools reorganised under the Hadow Scheme was comparatively small. According to official figures, only 16 per cent. of Voluntary School children of eleven years of age and over are in Senior Schools, while the ratio of Council School children 'in such schools is 62 per cent. The difficulties under which the Voluntary Schools labour was still further illustrated by the modest response' to the Education Act of 1936, which facilitated the erection of Voluntary Senior Schools, and it had become quite clear that the Dual System, as constituted, was militating against equality of opportunity.

The arguments about equality covered many other aspects of education. There was considerable agreement with the view that premises and the general activities of school life ought not to be of such divergent standard. 'At present,' to quote an opinion based on a thorough knowledge of English schools, 'some 90 per cent. of English children are confined for nine or ten years in school quarters which any educated middle-class person would instantly reject.'¹ There is also great variety in the size of classes, much to the disadvantage of children in elementary schools in which just before the war over 50,000 classes consisted of thirty to forty children, over 40,000 of between forty and fifty, and over 2,000 of between fifty and sixty. It was also difficult to avoid the conclusion that there was unfairness in the discrepancy in the duration of school life; opinions differed on the question, but it was difficult to justify the great disparity in the educational opportunity of the 80 per cent. who enter employment on leaving the Elementary School at fourteen and that of the 20 per cent. who proceed to the Secondary School and some on to the University or Technical College. The presence of American soldiers in this country helped to remind us that in the U.S.A. the compulsory age in forty-three out of forty-eight States is sixteen or over. Differences in fees in Secondary Schools also provoked discussion, and there was a remarkable interest in nursery education as a result of arrangements for child care made necessary by evacuation and the absence of mothers on munition work. Apart from the school training which a good nursery school affords, it was realised that it is an important factor in equalising chances in the

¹ *An Inspector's Testament*, by F. H. Spencer (English Universities Press, 1938).

first difficult years of life. It was also realised, as a result of the propaganda of the Ministry of Food, that a sound nutrition policy had much to do with equality of opportunity; school meals assumed a new importance and canteens for all school children became an agreed objective in educational planning.

FREEDOM IN EDUCATION

We have for many years in our educational practice attempted a difficult balancing feat, a daily reconciliation of the claims of the individual and of society; sometimes—e.g. the Dalton Plan, individual method, self-creative handwork—our emphasis has been on the individual, while at other times—organised games, group activities, team spirit—we have had social training as our objective. 'There appear,' said the Hadow Report, 'to be two opposing schools of modern educational thought . . . one attaches primary importance to the individual pupils and their interests; the other emphasises the claims of society as a whole, and seeks to equip the pupils for service as workmen and citizens in its organisation. When either tendency is carried too far the result is unsatisfactory.'¹

During the years immediately preceding the outbreak of the Second World War, there was an inclination in certain quarters to disturb this balance, and to advocate a simplification in our aims and a stronger social bias. It was contended that there was an unnecessary vagueness in our aim and purpose, that we were 'not half definite enough,' and that our teaching was not getting across. Such criticism came from various directions; for almost exactly the same complaints were made by enthusiasts about the teaching of religion, of citizenship and of physical training. There is an increasing demand, said some, for more definite teaching about the Christian creed; there is too much uncertainty and drifting. Citizenship ought to be taught directly, said others; it is silly to waste time in attempting to inculcate a civic sense by a general study of the classics or history. Games, said others, are a roundabout and uncertain method of ensuring national fitness; we should instead see that everyone has gymnastic training and is taught to take a personal interest in bodily health.

It was no doubt this trend of opinion which led Dr. Reginald Lennard, when writing about the threatened foundations of

¹ Report of Consultative Committee on *The Education of the Adolescent* (H.M. Stationery Office, 1926), p. 101.

democracy,¹ to single out education as being especially in peril. He saw totalitarianism as the outcome of two movements, one of impatience, manifesting itself in a desire for short-cuts, and the other of anti-intellectualism, due partly to the discovery that men are not as susceptible to reason as nineteenth-century optimists supposed. Among the foes of democracy he numbered those who exalt the cult of the body, nor did he welcome the tendency to stress the communal aspect of education. His misgivings about corporations, groups and societies suggest that he would not readily accept the views expressed in the preceding chapter about the school community and the educative value of communal association. During the war years, most of the creative thinking was concerned with the planning of post-war society, but there was also some reassertion of faith in a liberal education, and evidence of a strong disinclination to allow education either to mould or be moulded into any approved pattern. There can be little doubt that one of the greatest issues for education during the next decade will be the problem of the relationship between the State, the Local Authority and the Community, both as a whole and severally in each locality.

This problem will demand wise statesmanship, and if a new administrative technique is forged to give effect to a new social attitude, it will be necessary during the process for all friends of liberty to exercise an eternal vigilance. So many claimants will raise their heads and extend their hands, demanding as much territory as they can get within the rays of the educational sun. There will also be more subtle attempts at encroachment, imperceptible erosions and moves like the inclosure tactics which ate our common lands. Nor must we overlook the possibility of liberty being sometimes invoked by persons who are concerned not to advance its cause but to safeguard some particular interest of their own, as for example their own prestige.

There has been much said and written during the war years about the freedom of the Public Schools, both for and against. The question has arisen because at the beginning of the war it was assumed, as we have already noted, that there would be a general diminution in those high incomes upon which the Public Schools depend so largely for their clientèle, and as the war has proceeded there has been a general feeling both within and outside the Public School world that the old policy of isolationism

¹ Lennard: *Democracy: The Threatened Foundations* (C.U.P., 1941), pp. 74-7.

cannot very well survive into a new educational order. There has also been fairly wide agreement that there is much of great value in the Public School tradition which must be preserved—*tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem*—and that if somehow we could harmonise the position of the Public School with a democratic way of life it would be a momentous achievement.¹ To accomplish this, however, is not easy because the gulf between the Public Schools and Demos is considerable, due partly to the exclusiveness of the Public Schools and to some extent of Public School masters. 'Public School masters,' said a former head master of Eton, 'have to be stalked like stags in the Highlands.' As a nation we seldom 'clean our slates' and it is likely that the unique position of the Public Schools will continue for many years in some modified form; this trait of avoiding the logical and drastic has often served us well, but processes of slow transformation can be unsatisfactory. 'Anyone,' it has been said, 'who observes the way in which, during the last fifty years, the police-state of the nineteenth century has been transformed into the social service state of the twentieth, will realise how inequality is only able to maintain itself by acquiescence in concessions, for which it has to pay. And these concessions grow in volume. For every improvement in education, or health, or housing among the poor leads to an increased intensity of demand for further concessions. They realise the inadequacy of a social system which does not relate proportionately the toil and the gain of living.'² If this is a correct diagnosis of events, it is reasonable to expect that sooner or later, if Britain continues to walk along the democratic highway, all schools will come within the range of our governmental system; and it is probable that the main question now to be decided about Public Schools is at what pace and in what form the process of democratisation shall proceed.

Recent literature written from the Public School angle lays great stress upon the importance of freedom, but it is sometimes difficult for a reader unfamiliar with the Public School world, to understand for whom and for what this freedom is desired. As we have noted in Chapter III, great head masters of the Victorian age played a mighty part in building up the Public School tradition, and although these schools differ considerably one from

¹ For a delightful picture of a Public School (Wellington), published during the war years, see *A Victorian School*, by R. St. C. Talboys (Blackwell).

² Laski: *An Introduction to Politics* (Allen & Unwin, 1931), pp. 42, 43.

another, it is generally true of them that they stand for a way of life which has in the past been described as that of a Christian gentleman, but happily this is an objective which most schools now pursue. Much has been said during the war years on behalf of the Public Schools to suggest that the freedom they chiefly value is that of the head master to mould his corporate society along these traditional lines, and apparently it is feared that any loss of independence in the government of the school would diminish the head's opportunity of leading and inspiring his little kingdom in this way. It has, however, also been much argued on behalf of the Public Schools that an important freedom is that of the parent, able and anxious to pay the Public School boarding fees of £170 a year or more for the benefit of his child, and therein perhaps lies the principal difficulty for those who do not think that choice of school should depend on income. 'The fundamental issue,' says Dr. Tawney, 'is simple. It is whether the existence of a group of schools reserved for the children of the comparatively prosperous, and in a large measure isolated from the public system of education, is or is not, as the world is to-day, in the best interests of the nation. It cannot be decided by the venerable device of describing privileges as liberties.'¹ There is a danger of this other dualism becoming the new storm centre of the educational platform.

But transcending all other problems of educational freedom is that of safeguarding schools from being used as an instrument of government propaganda. It is to be hoped that the world will always remember, as a grim warning, how the Nazis exploited education to serve their wicked purposes, and it is important not to forget how readily this usurpation was welcomed at the beginning by thousands, including teachers. It meant for so many people escape 'from responsibility to subordination, from the freedom of the individual into the strait-jacket of the Idea.'² In this country we seem to be happily immune to mass hysteria, but one is sometimes shocked by the speed with which a flimsy educational idea will, as a result of propaganda, become the fashion. No aspect of education escaped the Nazi propagandists, and all German teachers, so it is said, took a vow in the following terms: 'Adolf Hitler, we swear that we will train the youth of

¹ *The Problem of the Public Schools*, by R. H. Tawney (published by Workers' Educational Association, 1943).

² Hartshorne: *German Youth and the Nazi Dream of Victory* (O.U.P.), p. 13.

Germany so that they will grow up in your ideology, for your aims and purposes, and in the direction set by your will. This is pledged to you by the whole German system of education, from the Primary School through to the University.¹ So surely did the German teachers implement their undertaking that one of the chief weapons in the Nazi armoury was the espionage of the child in the home; the children were often better Nazis than their parents, even at a tender age.² The curriculum of the German school under the Nazi régime made physical education the principal occupation. 'The State,' declares *Mein Kampf*, 'must throw the whole weight of its educational machinery, not into pumping its children full of knowledge, but into producing absolutely healthy bodies. The development of mental capacity is only of secondary importance.'

From time to time in this country we hear suggestions that text-books should be edited; it has been urged, for example, that history books in use in our schools should be purged of all military references, so that children will hear nothing of war. The censorship of text-books or any kind of central control of them is a dangerous game, and its practice by the Nazi régime should serve as a reminder of its perils. Indeed any tendency from without the school to direct the curriculum seriously endangers freedom, and that is one reason why it is most important in our education to cherish diversity and foster enterprise and experiment, if we wish to preserve the foundations of our democratic faith. 'It may be said,' the Dean of Saint Paul's has written, putting this momentous issue squarely, 'that the purpose of education is that the person educated may be able to take his place in the community, that he should be imbued with the traditions, ethos, the spirit of the social whole of which he is the part. In its extreme form this answer to the question is that the individual is educated by the State for the State, and this is a widespread and powerful view of the purpose of education at the present time. To me it seems to present one of the gravest dangers with which civilisation is confronted. It is a theory which is held by every kind of totalitarian state. In Tudor times, there was a phrase about "tuning" the pulpits to the Government. The Elizabethan

¹ Quoted by President of Board of Education in address to Surrey Teachers' Association, February, 1941.

² For an actual episode see Hartshorne: *German Youth and the Nazi Dream of Victory*, p. 18, and for a general picture see chapter ii ('The Family') of Erika Mann's *School for Barbarians* (Drummond).

Government managed to get parsons to say in the pulpit what suited Elizabethan policy. The same thing happens to-day, only it is not the pulpits which are "tuned," but the teachers. And this is true whether the totalitarian state be Nazi or Communist. The purpose of the educator on this theory is to turn out the educatee as a unit in a symphony whose conductor is a man or group of men who may be idealists, but are, if so, all the more dangerous for that. In this extreme form education becomes a kind of advertising medium; its purpose is to put across a system of ideas, values, emotional reactions, and even if the ideas were true, I should repudiate this conception of the aim of education as a treason against the integrity of the human mind.¹ What is necessary to save education from such misuse is that we should each one of us, as a method of vigilance, think out for ourselves the implications of each move on the chess-board as our new educational order is being planned and administered and acquire an instinct for the significance of any proposal affecting the fundamentals of school government or organisation.

SHAPING THE EDUCATION BILL

It is hoped that the foregoing paragraphs will afford some impression of public opinion about education during the war years prior to the presentation of the Education Bill. The technique pursued in shaping the Bill is well worth study as an illustration of how in a democracy the central government, if wisely led, can effectively sound opinion and consult the popular will when framing a comprehensive legislative measure. The Board of Education made the first practical approach to the problem of reconstruction by producing a very tentative document, in which various suggestions, some with far-reaching implications, were put forward for consideration. This *Green Book*—so called because of its reputed colour—was issued fairly early in 1941; a confidential statement drawn up by the Board's principal officers, it was distributed privately to various organisations in such a blaze of secrecy that it achieved an unusual degree of publicity. Questions were asked about it in the House of Commons, and the President described its purpose as 'to serve as a basis of preliminary talks between the Board's officers and the accredited representatives of local authorities, teachers'

¹ W. R. Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's, in article on 'Spiritual Objectives of Education', *Journal of Adult Education*, December, 1936.

associations and other bodies with which the Board are associated in the education service.' When, however, this accredited queue had been supplied with the little green book, hundreds of other people set about staking a claim to a share in this ration of secret cogitation. To appease this demand, it was decided to issue publicly 'a summary of the main subjects and questions covered by the memorandum.'¹ This summary furnished an excellent agenda for discussions on the future of education, and included such items as (i) the appropriate age of transfer from primary to secondary education; (ii) the question whether separate Local Authorities for elementary education should continue; (iii) the desirability of one code for all types of secondary education; (iv) how to distribute children between different types of secondary school; (v) the future of Day Continuation Schools and their relation to the Youth Service, recently established; (vi) the need for a unified system of awarding all University and similar scholarships; (vii) the Nursery problem, including the age at which the Local Education Authority should assume responsibility; (viii) the relationships between education and industry, and the need for an expansion of technical, commercial and art education; (ix) the special needs of handicapped and maladjusted children; (x) the recruitment and training of teachers; (xi) 'the question how the dual system can be adapted to a reformed system so as to secure equality of opportunity and sound and economical organisation'; (xii) a more uniform system of remuneration of teachers; (xiii) a more equitable distribution of the cost of education as between the Exchequer and the local rate; (xiv) arrangements for the provision of meals and milk. There were some notable omissions from this agenda, but most of the gaps can be explained by the fact that some important aspects of education are outside the purview of the Board of Education, and presumably it would be contrary to the laws of the Medes and Persians for them to figure in any memorandum not drawn up by 'the appropriate department.' But there was no doubt in any quarter that the Officers of the Board had fulfilled with great ability the important task assigned to them; they had raised the principal issues most effectively, and lit a candle which could not be extinguished.

When in the summer of 1941 Mr. Butler assumed office, the

¹ See *Education* (the organ of the Association of Education Committees), October 31st, 1941, p. 369.

Green Book had already had the effect of stimulating the preparation of constructive memoranda by the various organisations which had received it, and in addition there was a growing spate of post-war planning on the part of numerous other societies and individuals. Churches, Local Authorities, Teachers' Organisations, Political Parties, all in turn voiced their aspirations, and the new President and the Parliamentary Secretary for Education, Mr. Chuter Ede, were soon heavily engaged in converting the strange mixture of opinion into an acceptable blend,

'Not chaos-like together crushed and bruised
But, as the world, harmoniously confused,
Where order in variety we see,
And where, though all things differ, all agree.'

For many months the President and his expert advisers conferred with interested parties and listened with the utmost patience and sympathy to innumerable deputations. Mr. Butler and Mr. Ede also travelled the country, sounding local opinion and expounding their educational gospel. One of the best pieces of war-time reading has been Lord Wavell's *Generals and Generalship*, in which he makes so effectively the point that generalship consists primarily not, as is commonly believed, in skilful strategy or tactics but rather in qualities of personality and capacity for hard work and sound administrative preparation. It was leadership of this quality, diligently applied through many arduous months, that succeeded in moulding the educational aspirations of the day into practical shape; and in July, 1943, the President was able to present to Parliament the first-fruits of his labours in the form of a White Paper entitled *Educational Reconstruction*, the first of the great State documents on social reform conceived during the War.¹

THE WHITE PAPER

The White Paper was prefaced by a text, culled from Disraeli: 'Upon the education of this country the fate of this country depends,' and this and certain other general observations gave a clue to the principles that would underlie the forthcoming legislation. Among the foremost objectives were: 'a happier childhood,' 'a better start,' 'enriching the inheritance of the country,' 'means for all of developing the various talents,' 'diversity' of

¹ *Educational Reconstruction*, July, 1943 (H.M.S.O., Cmd. 6458).

opportunity and not 'a single pattern,' 'education is a continuous process conducted in successive stages,' 'educational influences up to eighteen years of age,' 'the completion of reorganisation is the most crying need in the field of whole-time education,' 'the nature of a child's education should be determined by his capacity and promise and not by the financial circumstances of the parent,' the facilities of 'boarding education' should be 'extended within the ambit of the state system,' 'it is not the machinery of education so much as its content that will count in future,' 'public opinion will, undoubtedly, look for a new approach to the choice and treatment of school subjects after the war,' 'the desire to revive the spiritual and personal values in our society and in our national tradition,' 'the church, the family, the local community and the teacher—all have their part to play in imparting religious instruction to the young,' 'the value of this (religious) teaching depends on the availability of suitable teachers,' 'it is desirable that any legislation should prescribe the status of the Local Education Authority in relation to all types of secondary schools and that steps should be taken to give authoritative definition of the status and powers of the Governing Body,' every Secondary School 'should have an instrument of government,' 'the process of education for the vast majority of children offers at present an example of "under-exposure, under-development and insufficient fixing,"' 'industry and commerce should review their arrangements for training and should co-operate in associating the technical colleges and art schools more fully with the industrial and commercial life of the country,' 'without provision for adult education the national system must be incomplete,' 'the education service has a concern to provide opportunities for the healthy use of leisure by children and young people,' 'the setting up of a comprehensive national health service will eventually ensure that all forms of treatment which school children require will be available for them through that service,' 'no less important is the proper feeding of the children,' 'there are still many children, especially in the large towns, who are inadequately clothed or shod,' as to access to the Universities 'the aim of a national policy must be to ensure that high ability is not handicapped by the accidents of place of residence or lack of means,' 'it depends almost entirely upon the quality of those who staff the schools whether the reforms proposed will be merely administrative reforms or . . . real educational reforms,' the

teaching profession should represent so far as practicable, 'a cross section of the interests and experiences of society at large,' 'while the State does not claim a monopoly in the conduct of education, it cannot divest itself of all responsibility for those children whose parents prefer to have them educated in schools outside the public system, and such parents are entitled to have some assurance that the independent schools of their choice are sufficiently well found and staffed to fulfil the educational purposes which they purport to do,' 'all Local Education Authorities should be charged with all educational functions,' 'however Local Education Authorities may be constituted, there should be arrangements for preserving and stimulating local interest.'

THE EDUCATION BILL

The gospel thus expounded was brought into statutory shape in an Education Bill of 111 clauses and nine schedules; it occupied 97 pages with also a closely printed financial memorandum of five pages. The contents of the Bill were clearly summarised in an explanatory memorandum presented at the same time by the President to Parliament in December, 1943.¹ The Bill itself was divided into five parts, to come into operation on the dates indicated:

- | | |
|---|---|
| I. Central Administration | .. On the passage of the Bill into Law, August 3rd, 1944. |
| II. The Statutory System | .. April 1st, 1945. |
| III. Independent Schools | .. Some date after April 1st, 1945, by Order in Council. |
| IV. General—Miscellaneous, Administrative and Financial | April 1st, 1945. |
| V. Supplemental | On the passage of the Bill into Law. |

Part I consisted of only five clauses but was very important. For it provides for the disappearance of the Board of Education by the repeal of the Board of Education Act, 1899, and in its place there will be a Ministry and a Minister, whose duty it will be to

¹ *Education Bill. Explanatory Memorandum by the President of the Board of Education, 1943* (H.M.S.O., Cmd. 6492). For a good unofficial summary see *New Education Bill* by H. C. Dent (University of London Press Ltd., 1944); and for an example of its local implications see *Education Act, 1944: Preliminary Considerations in regard to Local Administration* (Manchester Education Committee, 1944).

secure the effective execution by Local Education Authorities of the national education policy, instead of being responsible as the old Board was for the mere 'superintendence of matters relating to education in England and Wales.' This change, said the explanatory memorandum, will not involve any diminution in the responsibility of local education authorities but will secure 'a recognition of the principle that the public system of education, though administered locally, is the nation's concern, the full benefits of which should be equally available to all alike, wherever their homes may be.' The other important provision in this part of the Bill was the setting-up of two Central Advisory Councils, one for England and the other for Wales and Monmouthshire 'to advise the Minister upon such matters connected with educational theory and practice as they think fit, and upon any questions referred to them by him.'

Part II, composed of 64 clauses, represents the main body of the Bill and divides into five sections: (a) Local administration, (b) the Three Stages of the Statutory System, (c) Primary and Secondary Education, (d) Further Education, and (e) Supplementary Provisions. All these sections are important, and it is only possible here to give a brief indication of their purport.

Local administration undergoes two far-reaching reforms; first, the present division of education into two fields, elementary and higher, disappears and all local education authorities are in future responsible for all the statutory aspects of education; second, as a consequence, local authorities responsible only for Elementary Education disappear and the number of Local Education Authorities is thus reduced from 315 to not more than 146, namely the London County Council, 62 County Councils, and 83 County Boroughs. There is provision for combinations of authorities, and a schedule of the Bill entitled, 'Delegation of Functions of Local Education Authorities,' represents a careful attempt to ensure, in spite of the fewer and therefore larger authorities, the continuance of local incentive by schemes of delegation and divisional administration. This radical change, involving as it did the eclipse of many zealous Local Education Authorities which had exercised powers over elementary education since 1902, was probably the most controversial proposal in the Bill, just taking priority in that respect over the still highly contentious religious question. The proposal did, of course, greatly extend the scope of the County Councils in those areas

in which the former Local Authorities for Elementary Education were situated, but special provision was included in the Bill to treat the more populous of the latter as 'excepted districts' with extremely wide delegated powers.

Having declared that the statutory system of education shall be organised in three progressive stages—Primary, Secondary and Further—the Bill proceeds to indicate in detail how this shall be done; and it makes it the parent's duty to cause his child 'to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude.' This duty begins when the child is five and continues until the termination of the compulsory school age, that is to say, fifteen (on a date to be determined by the Minister within two years of April 1st, 1945), and later, sixteen, by Order in Council. The administrative pivot of this part of the Bill is the Development Plan for Primary and Secondary Education, which the Local Education Authority will be required to prepare after many consultations, and there is to be subsequently the submission of a scheme for Further Education, after consultation with the Universities, with educational associations and the authorities of neighbouring areas concerned, which when approved by the Minister, it will be the duty of the Local Authority to put into effect. Colleges are to be provided which young people who have left school will be required to attend for a day or two half-days a week up to the age of eighteen. It is expected that these will be great institutions, housed in good buildings and staffed by teachers specially trained for work of this kind; the colleges will not therefore come into existence until 'on and after such dates as His Majesty may by Order in Council determine.'

Much of Part II is concerned with the Dual System which is continued and in a sense invigorated, but there are some fundamental modifications in the compromise. The proposals are perhaps best considered in two parts, (a) government, (b) religious education. All the schools are given an option as to their future status; they can, through their Governors or Managers, elect either to be 'Aided' or 'Controlled'. If they choose to be 'aided' their financial liability will be limited to half the cost of improvements and external repairs; while they will continue to appoint their own teachers and have the teachers' salaries and other maintenance charges paid out of rates and taxes by the Local Education Authority. If on the other hand, they elect to become 'controlled', all financial responsibility falls on the Local

Education Authority; appointments of teachers will be made by the Authority but after certain consultations with the managers concerning both the head teacher and those assistant teachers who will give a limited amount of denominational teaching. In addition, there may be about 500 'Special Agreement Schools,' projected under the Education Act, 1936, and in these the appointment of teachers will rest with the Authority subject to certain rights of the managers or governors concerning teachers who will give denominational teaching. It is important to notice that these proposals apply both to secondary and primary schools, and another important point is that there will be no fees after April 1st, 1945, in Primary or Secondary Schools maintained by Local Education Authorities. Parents who desire to pay fees will be able to do so only by sending their children to independent, (including Public Schools), private or direct grant schools. Primary Schools are to have managers and the Secondary Schools within the statutory system are to have governors, as follows:

PRIMARY

<i>County.</i>	<i>Controlled.</i>	<i>Aided.</i>
As the Authority may determine.	2 Foundation. 4 Representative.	4 Foundation. 2 Representative.

SECONDARY

<i>County.</i>	<i>Controlled.</i>	<i>Aided (or Special Agreement).</i>
As the Authority may determine.	Such number as the Minister may determine, provided that one-third are Foundation, and two-thirds are appointed by L.E.A.	Such numbers as the Minister may determine, provided that two-thirds are Foundation, and one-third are appointed by L.E.A.

The changes which affect religious education include a provision that all Primary and Secondary Schools within the statutory system shall begin each school day with a corporate act of worship, and also that religious teaching shall be given in all these schools. In future religious teaching may be given at any time during the school day, thus ending an important but unfortunate feature of the 1870 compromise. In 'County' (or Council) Schools religious teaching is to be based on 'an agreed

syllabus,' while in the 'aided' and 'special agreement' schools there will be denominational teaching. In the 'controlled' schools there will be both 'an agreed syllabus' and also provision for denominational teaching during not more than two periods a week. The conscience clause is continued. 'I think,' says Mr. H. C. Dent, 'it must be agreed that, faced with the necessity of making a compromise on the twofold problem of dual control and religious education, Mr. Butler has stretched ingenuity to pretty well its furthest limits.'¹ Indeed Mr. Dent sees in this new compromise a transitional character, a view which others share. 'I believe,' he says, 'Mr. Butler's compromise is workable, and that one of its chief virtues is that before it has been in operation for many years all the denominational schools not supported by a strong local denominational interest will have become controlled schools. When that time comes it will be possible to talk in terms of absolute justice, that is, in terms of fully maintained denominational schools for those who desire them.' Perhaps the most important of the other provisions in Part II is the wide definition of further education, which has an important bearing upon the future development of community life; it embraces County Colleges for young people, technical, commercial and art education, and 'leisure-time occupation, in such organised cultural training and recreative activities as are suited to their requirements, for any persons over compulsory school age who are able and willing to profit by the facilities provided.'

Of the many other provisions in the Bill, the most important in the interest of the children are those affecting the provision of meals, maintenance allowances and medical treatment, all of which will receive further consideration when the social legislation dealing with the Beveridge proposals and national health is enacted. The financial memorandum which accompanied the Bill also creates an impression that it by no means represents the last word on the formidable problem of meeting the cost. In 1938-9 the Government grant represented 49·36 per cent. of the expenditure; it will rise in the first year of the new Act to 51·36, and later to about 55 per cent.; and there is to be a special grant to assist the poorest areas so as to try and make opportunity less dependent on one's place of residence. But in order to carry out the Bill thousands of new teachers of good quality have to be attracted to the service, and the cost of teachers' salaries is always the major part of educational expenditure. Under the Bill the

¹ *The New Education Bill* (University of London Press), p. 20.

Minister is empowered to secure 'that the remuneration paid by local education authorities to teachers is in accordance with scales approved by him,' and in approving scales he is to have regard to recommendations made 'by any body of persons constituted by the Minister which is representative of local education authorities and of teachers.'¹ Until, therefore, the new Burnham Committee constituted under this clause has reported, all forecasts of expenditure under the Bill are highly problematical, and even when the salary scales are approved there are so many factors still undetermined that conjectures as to the cost of the Bill at this stage are not much more reliable than crystal-gazing. All that we can be sure about is that the finance of the Bill will in the next four years engage a great deal of attention as also will the incidence of the cost as between rates and taxes.

MR. BUTLER INTRODUCES HIS BILL

The second reading was taken on January 19th, 1944, when Mr. Butler rose before a crowded House to present his great measure. Lobby correspondents likened the occasion to that of 1918, when at the close of World War No. 1, Herbert Fisher brought forward his famous Bill. It was, however a superficial comparison, and the right historical parallel was surely with 1870 for not since that Victorian heyday, not even in 1902, has Parliament considered an Education Bill so fraught with far-reaching consequences or concerned so profoundly with fundamental issues. 'The Bill,' said Mr. Butler, never inclined to overstatement, 'completely recasts the whole law as it affects education.' He spoke for about seventy minutes with an unforced persuasiveness which carried conviction in every quarter of the House, and when he sat down, Members were disposed to accept as unassailable his conclusion: 'We to-day have the responsibility for laying the foundation for the nation's future and we dare not fail.'

As an authoritative commentary on the Bill, the speech is invaluable to all who have to apply it administratively.² Mr. Butler began by explaining to the House the new powers assigned to the Minister, who would now, he observed with characteristic irony, lose the assistance of a Board of Education that had never met. But he would instead be advised by two Councils, and he

¹ N.B.—The wording of Clause 89 of the Education Act differs somewhat from that in the original clause of the Bill.

² Parliamentary Debates (Hansard), Vol. 396, No. 16, pp. 207-31.

pleased Welsh members by his special reference to the proposed 'Welsh Education Advisory Council,' which he said, 'should help to link the national policy, as it unfolds, with the cultural and linguistic history of the Welsh people.' At the same time he was careful to emphasise that although the powers of the Minister were expanded, 'the central authority must continue to rely on the local education authorities for the administration of all national policy'; in fact, he observed, 'the Bill has been fashioned with the help and advice of local administrators and depends absolutely for its success on their continued zeal and devotion.' He seized an opportunity also to pay a tribute to 'the fine tradition of the inspectorate who are the special apostles of widening and humanising contacts'; the advisory Councils would supplement and not supplant their valuable service, and he noted also that 'the new Ministry will have for the first time, as well as the local education authorities, the power to encourage and promote research.'

The aim of the Bill, he declared, quoting Plato, was 'to make the citizens as happy and harmonious as possible'; and when he came to 'what this Bill does,' he put first the fact that it substituted, as an educational minimum, the three 'A's' for the three 'R's'. It now became a parent's duty to cause his child 'to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude.' As a corollary to this, schools had to be provided in every area 'sufficient in number, character and equipment' to offer 'such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of the different ages, abilities and aptitudes.' He then sought to show how the Bill provides for 'the health and happiness of children,' beginning with a reference to nursery schools and classes. He repudiated indignantly any suggestion that this would 'supplant the home,' and declared that it was the Government's desire to encourage family life, 'the healthiest cell in the body politic'; and 'we hope to try and help children both in their physical, moral and religious development.' Experience of evacuation had shown that many homes need helping, and nursery schools and classes 'are not only social centres of training and upbringing for the children, but have a real educational value and are often centres of adult education for the parents themselves.'

He then dealt with the provision to be made for 'the handicapped child,' and contended that his object was 'to provide the

necessary flexibility, so as to enable advantage to be taken of new developments in medical education or psychological diagnosis and practice as they come along.' Certification under the Mental Deficiency Acts for education purposes would be abolished, and a duty was laid upon local education authorities to ascertain all children who, because of disability of mind or body, need special attention. On the subject of school meals, he said that it was one of the sections of administration which appealed to him most 'because you can actually see the worth of the investment in the children.' Members might complain that the clause affecting meals and milk had been drawn in too broad terms, but the answer was that 'the conditions governing these services may have to be adjusted at some future date to the decisions on family allowances.' The clause dealing with medical inspection and treatment had also been drafted with an eye to further legislation. 'With the development of the new National Health Service,' he continued, 'we trust the duties of school medical officers will be widened, and that that beneficent preventive agency, the school medical service, will become part of the general health services of the nation and an instrument for building up, through childhood, a sounder and fitter people.' Parents would in future be 'under an obligation to submit their children to medical inspection,' and the medical services would be extended equally to the Colleges for Young People, which the House subsequently decided to call County Colleges. This extension of the provision for medical inspection and treatment up to the age of eighteen was a notable advance. Young people over the school-leaving age 'are the most susceptible to certain illnesses and subject to the unaccustomed strain of their new working life.'

This supervision of youth on the medical and employment side would, said Mr. Butler, explain why the Government was so keen 'to re-enact Mr. Fisher's proposals' and provide a continuing education. 'Education should be the ally,' he declared, 'and not the dreaded competitor of employment.' The age-range of the new part-time colleges would depend on the date at which full-time schooling ended, and the Government's intention was 'to raise the age to fifteen at the earliest possible date.' He explained that the date would be at the earliest April 1st, 1945, and at the latest April 1st, 1947, and depended on the course of the war and its bearing on the supply of teachers and labour for building. Power was also taken to raise the age to sixteen at a later date by

an Order in Council; 'the only hesitation in naming a definite date, as I understand some Hon. Members would have preferred,' said Mr. Butler, 'derives from the need to press ahead with certain educational reforms long overdue which I regret to say I have found waiting for me on my desk. One of the most important of these is complete reorganisation. I think it would be wrong to oblige children to stay at school until they are sixteen in unreorganised schools where there would not be the means to give them the advanced and continued education suitable to them.' The Order in Council would, however, be introduced 'as soon as the Minister is satisfied that it has become practicable to do so'; and it is important for authorities 'in framing their plans for their new secondary schools to bear this in mind.' He then dealt at length with the great problems that would arise at the conclusion of the war of teacher supply and building labour and materials, concluding with the observation that 'our keenness . . . must be tempered by consideration of what is possible,' but 'these early dates for the introduction of Part II, for the raising of the age to fifteen, and for forging ahead with the establishment of the machinery of the Bill . . . show that we are anxious to preserve our first priority in social reform.'

On the subject of County Colleges, Mr. Butler drew a comparison with the provision for Continuation Schools in the Fisher Act, declaring that there were 'marked differences' of much importance. 'We show,' he said, 'less disposition to be leisurely than did the Act of 1918, which allowed an interval of seven years before attendance was required of young people from sixteen to eighteen'; moreover, we propose a single appointed day for the whole country and we propose no exemptions. The obligation will be to attend one whole day or two half-days a week, no fees will be payable, and there must be no sense of a return to school; 'we must have teachers with a new and broad outlook.' The House, he surmised, might think the period of attendance too short, 'but we desire to get the thing going this time, and we are compelled to be modest in our initial demands.' It should be remembered that those Colleges would be 'a greater incentive to young people to take part in voluntary leisure-time activities' and in the many agencies which in connection with 'the service of youth' have done such excellent work during the war. The Colleges for young people will be under the control of Authorities, 'but attendance can be made at a school set up by a

firm so long as it conforms to satisfactory standards.' He hoped also that the young students would have the opportunity through these Colleges to continue with their technical courses, and that 'their cultural needs and physical fitness will be regarded as of very great importance.' The needs of the rural areas would require special attention and it might be that residential colleges would be established. The co-operation of industry was most important, and we shall have to have it 'if this scheme is to work.'

He next directed attention to technical, adult and agricultural education. 'The best way,' he said, 'I can bring home to the House the scope of technical education is by saying that we have provided for building loan charges to cover a programme of capital expenditure amounting in the seventh year to at least £22,000,000, rising eventually to £32,000,000.' As to adult education there is a tendency 'to lump it' with technical education, but we feel that 'adult education must centre itself around the existing focal points, and provision is therefore made for consultation between the Local Education Authorities, the Universities and the existing educational associations.' On the subject of agricultural education, Mr. Butler made an important statement, anticipating a fuller one made subsequently by Mr. R. S. Hudson, the Minister for Agriculture, with whom he was glad to say he saw 'eye to eye on the matter.' 'We agree,' he declared, 'that the technical agricultural education for the young, excluding higher education at University Departments of Agriculture and Agricultural Colleges, shall properly be regarded as falling within the sphere of the general education service. It has been decided that this should be the responsibility of the local Education Authorities, as in the case of technical education for other industries.' Thus was set at rest much of the anxiety for the future of agricultural education caused by the majority report of the Luxmoore Committee which proposed to divorce agriculture from the general service of technical education. (The case against such a severance is admirably stated in a Minority Report by the Hon. Mrs. Youard.)

Mr. Butler here observed that he had reached 'half-time' in his speech; for the remainder, he feared that he would be playing against the wind, for he had some difficult problems to present to the House. He dealt first with the Secondary School, and said that in the new attitude to Secondary education he had

two main objectives: (1) accessibility to all of the various types of education, (2) preservation of traditions and standards 'so far as possible.' 'There is,' he continued in a sentence that indicates a criterion that will probably often be applied to his proposals, 'no desire to "level down"; there is only a desire to bring everybody ever upward.' Perhaps it was this statement, which led a Member to crystallise Mr. Butler's aim in the phrase—'An Old Etonian tie in every satchel.'¹ On the question of accessibility, he said fees would be prohibited in all county and auxiliary schools, whether primary and secondary, and there must be by means of the Development Plans adequate provision of places in Secondary Schools of various types to meet the needs of all. But what about the direct-grant Grammar Schools? The Government, said Mr. Butler, now obviously kicking into the wind, see no reason why a clean sweep should be made of fees in this limited class of school, but they should be accessible to all whatever their financial circumstances, and local authorities should be able to count on places in them 'to supplement the provision in the maintained schools.' If, contended Mr. Butler, we insisted on a prohibition of fees, some of these schools might leave the State system altogether and 'produce the diametrically opposite effect to what the opponents of fees desire, since it would accentuate social distinctions and widen existing gaps.'

He then discussed the dual system, and expressed the basic issue in words which he had found in an old Grammar School charter:

'God, of his abundant grace, hath sent copious plenty of children, but not plenty of money to maintain them.'

Consequently, Mr. Butler showed that at any rate from 1902 onwards, there has been 'a progressive inability on the part of Voluntary School managers to discharge their statutory liabilities.' He also argued that the dual system as it at present exists 'is incompatible with the effective organisation of the schools of the country and with the wise and economical use of teaching power, the effective utilisation of which is more important now than it was ever before.' He said the problem would not be serious if the number of church schools was small, but they constitute more than half the Elementary Schools of the country, although because they are often small they deal only with a

¹ *Punch*, January 26th, 1944.

minority of children. The Government, having come to the conclusion that the dual system must continue in some form, sought to eliminate as much of the friction involved in its operation as possible; they had given managers the dual choice, either to become a controlled or an aided school. He explained the difference between these two proposed types of Voluntary School; 'controlled' meant full financial responsibility by the State and public control of management and of the appointment of teachers, and 'aided' meant no substantial increase in control and a partial financial responsibility. 'Members,' he observed with reference to the incidence of the cost of 'aided' schools, 'who sometimes say that these terms are not generous should be reminded that the running costs of the aided schools, whether Primary or Secondary, are to be paid, with the sole exception of half the cost of the outer repairs to the building. I do not think, therefore, that the House can regard the offer as being conceived in other than a generous spirit.' He was convinced that any solution must take account of our traditional policy that any further increased aid must be accompanied by increased public control, and that if it did not do so, it 'might bring about a reaction as detrimental to the churches as to the cause of education itself.' He hoped that those who felt deeply would dismiss from their minds any suspicion that the Government wished to force unwilling managers out of business: and he sought to reassure them by quoting from the hymn:¹

'Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.'

He then referred to the provisions in the Bill for a daily collective act of worship in all County and Auxiliary Schools, and to the requirement that religious teaching should be given in all these schools. The old conscience clause would continue 'for the rights of conscience must remain inviolate.' He spoke of the special problem of the single-school area, but hoped that historic grievances would disappear and referred to the provisions as to agreed syllabuses. 'It is indeed a happy augury to note the coming together of those between whom a gulf has been fixed for

¹ Newman quotes the same verse when arguing that science will help and not injure religion. *On the Scope and Nature of University Education* (Dent: E.L., p. 247).

so long.' The churches, he added, should never forget their own responsibility for the out-of-school period.

Next he dealt with finance. 'It has been,' he said, 'part of the feature of this Bill that the whole burden should not be borne by the State but should be borne also by other agencies—the local authorities, managers, or voluntary agencies. There would, however, be an improvement in the grant from central funds to local authorities which will rise to an overall 55 per cent.' He then referred to 'the poorest authorities,' remarking slyly that he was not sure whether this discrimination between rich and poor 'appeals to Hon. Members opposite.' Nearly £1,000,000 would be available for distribution to such areas. He explained that he was merely making an improvement in a transitional grant formula, and not attempting to reform local finance. Questions concerning the whole finance of local government had yet to be thrashed out, and if he were to await such a radical change he would have to hold up these reforms indefinitely.

Similarly, he contended it was not part of his job to reform local government, but the new definitions of elementary and higher education demand a revision of local government units. The details of the proposals were set out, he hoped clearly, in the first schedules of the Bill; the terms are vital to 'many of the best friends of education' and we have revised our original proposals 'in order to maintain an essential local interest, while observing the need for units able to carry out the vast range of educational provision which is provided for in the Bill.'

In conclusion, in a memorable passage, he claimed that perhaps the Bill owed its welcome to an appreciation of the synthesis it tried to create between order and liberty, between local initiative and national direction, between the voluntary agencies and the State, between the private life of a school and the public life of the districts which it served, between manual and intellectual skill and between those better and less well endowed. 'Hammered on the anvil of this war,' he declared, 'our nation has been shaped to a new unity of pride and purpose. We must preserve this after victory is won if the fruits of victory are to be fully garnered; and that unity will, by this Bill, be founded, where it should be founded, in the education and training of youth.'

THE DEBATES

The debates reached a high level, certainly not below that of

the great argument of 1870; their thermal content, however, was much lower and for that reason they occupied much less time. Nineteen days sufficed in the House of Commons as against approximately thirty in 1870, and fifty-nine for the stormy passage of the Balfour Act of 1902. The 'obstructives,' as Tenniel, the great cartoonist, termed them in 1870, were not much in evidence, and there were signs that they were not unaware that during the seventy-odd intervening years opinion had grown weary of them. Indeed, when Mr. John Parker, on behalf of the Labour Party, rose from the other side of the House at the close of Mr. Butler's speech, he began by promising him the support of all his friends against hostile forces which might try to alter the Bill or spoil it. It is worth noting from what quarters Mr. Parker anticipated attack: (i) the forces of snobbery, (ii) those who desire to maintain small education authorities, and (iii) 'enthusiastic sectarian protagonists.'

Mr. Parker himself seemed most anxious about the first of his trinity of potential foes; and suggested that the Government had already been too tender with them. Mr. Butler's friends, he said, were fond of quoting Disraeli: but what about 'the two nations'? Fifty-six per cent. of the Members of the House of Commons came from Public Schools which only two per cent. of our population attended; it was wrong that the Public Schools should be left outside our national system of education. He deplored, too, the attitude of the Government to the Direct Grant Secondary Schools; the majority of the Fleming Committee (eleven members as against seven) had recommended abolition of fees in these schools, yet the Bill disregarded the recommendation. He would like to see these schools, like the maintained schools, brought into the field where no fees would be charged. Others spoke to the same effect. 'The time has come,' said Mr. John Wilmot, 'when all public aid to schools should go through the one channel, the local education authority; all publicly aided schools would be on an equal basis and, when the Bill becomes law, they would all be subject to the rule—that there should be no fees payable in schools which received public aid.' Captain Cobb, after paying a general tribute to the Bill and its draughtsmanship—'it is such a great change to read a Bill which is pleasant to read and easy to understand'—replied to Mr. Parker's attitude to fees: 'I cannot understand,' he said, 'this idea which appears to prevail in progressive and Left-Wing circles that there is something indecent about

parents paying for a child's education.' Mr. Kenneth Lindsay, speaking with exceptional knowledge and experience gained as Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Education, said that he agreed with those who said that fees ought to be abolished, but fees, he argued, are linked with freedom, with religious teaching, with the ratio of master to boys, and are based on a contract between a parent and a head master. If fees are to be abolished, he continued, there must be a choice of schools open to every parent and there must be guarantees of freedom. 'There are dangers of too-static development plans, dangers of riveting a set scheme on any one area.' He believed that 'the essence of education in this country is the freedom of the individual school.'

The case for the Authorities for Elementary Education—the Part III Areas—who lose their powers under the Bill was well argued by Mr. Lipson and Mr. Hutchinson. Mr. Lipson quoted the example of his own authority, Cheltenham, which would cease to have powers of its own though it had been most progressive. It had raised the school-leaving age to fifteen as far back as 1934; all its schools were reorganised under the Hadow Scheme, and there was not a bad school building in the whole of his constituency. Yet, he said, Cheltenham was to lose its autonomy and be brought under the jurisdiction of a County Council mainly concerned with rural education. Mr. Hutchinson, the Member for Ilford (a large Part III area) accepted Mr. Butler's view that there must be a single authority in every area, administering all branches of education, but why should this principle involve the extinction of boroughs fully capable of undertaking all the responsibilities with which local authorities were to be charged under the Bill? 'Where you have existing Part III authorities,' he argued, 'with substantial resources and substantial experience of administering elementary education . . . there should be in suitable cases delegation to the borough council and not to this new divisional executive.' The opposite view was voiced by Mr. Moelwyn Hughes, K.C., who expressed disapproval of 'the amount of correspondence, discussion and conference that Part III authorities have been indulging in.' Education, he said, must be a through process. Some of the best speeches affecting local government were made, not on the Part III problem as such, but on the wider issue of local finance. Mr. Clement Davies, K.C., Member for Montgomeryshire,

pleaded the cause of the poor areas. The penny rate of Surrey, he said, produces over £50,000 a year, while my Montgomeryshire has to make do with a penny rate of £630 a year. The penny rate in Flint was worth twice as much as that in Montgomeryshire. But why should the children of Flint be given privileges that Montgomeryshire could not possibly give. It was nonsense to ask the poor authorities to carry out this Bill without generous assistance from the State. 'They have been held back because of this penny rate.'

The House of Commons at last showed itself able to discuss religious education in a temperate atmosphere. Occasionally the winds of controversy began to blow: 'It is a lying slander,' interjected Mr. Cove, whose knowledge of schools in England and Wales is second to none, when Professor Savory of Belfast spoke of 'the ignorance of the elements of Christianity showed by very many evacuees.' But the moderate tone sounded by Sir Geoffrey Shakespeare early in the debate generally prevailed. Son of the first Moderator of the Free Churches, he could speak also with experience as a former Parliamentary Secretary both at the Board of Education and the Ministry of Health. Mr. Butler, he claimed, had achieved 'a very delicate balance,' and although he did not like the dual system, he realised that 'we have to accept and recognise it.' He warned members not to upset the compromise which the President had so very skilfully and patiently negotiated. The Catholic spokesmen put their case for a 100 per cent. grant for aided schools cogently and forcibly, but they did not divide the House during the second reading. There was an interesting little episode just before Mr. Butler rose to make his speech: the Archbishop of Westminster, Dr. Griffin, enthroned only the day before, was ushered into the Distinguished Strangers' Gallery and his presence was a reminder of the importance which his Church attached to the Bill. 'I do want on this occasion,' said Mr. Stokes, one of the principal exponents of the Catholic case, 'to try to state with the greatest moderation, without exaggeration or heated feeling, the Catholic position in this matter. As far as we are concerned there is no religious controversy in this at all.' His arguments were therefore largely concerned with the details of Voluntary School finance, and he claimed that in the last twenty-five years £3,500,000 had been collected to defray the cost of Catholic education. 'In fact,' he urged, 'the Catholics have done the British taxpayer a good turn.' There were some

excellent speeches from the Church of England standpoint from both sides of the House, and among them some which advocated the repeal of the Cowper-Temple clause. Mr. Henry Brooke hoped that he might live to see it laid aside, as having served its purpose and become obsolete. Meanwhile, he continued, 'I would rather see this Bill go through in much its present form.' The Member for the University of Wales, Professor W. J. Gruffydd, made an inspiring speech, stressing the importance of the teacher and warned the House not to forget the child. 'There is always the danger,' he said, 'that while we are oiling and adjusting this vastly intricate machine, we may overlook what that machine is meant to produce.' Like Mr. Kenneth Lindsay, he attached the highest importance to the question of school government; 'a school,' he contended, 'can never become a real community if it has not its own governing body,' an attractive generalisation which he did not support with any evidence. Before accepting his opinion, we do well to recall such examples as the Harpur Trust at Bedford, which, dating back to 1552 and evolving through the centuries, has provided its four excellent Secondary Schools with one governing body; or the example of the famous schools of the King Edward's Foundation in Birmingham (two High Schools and four Grammar Schools), administered most successfully by one body, operating under the Birmingham (King Edward VI) Schools Act of 1900.

The Government reply at the close of the second reading debate was given by Mr. Chuter Ede, the Parliamentary Secretary. He claimed that the compromise so carefully arrived at would enable the Dual System to work, and gave us an opportunity of solving a problem which had defied nearly all the democratic countries of the English-speaking world; in the U.S.A., Australia, and New Zealand not a penny went to the denominational school. Reminding the House that never in our history were there so few adherents to any particular denomination, nevertheless there were a great many people who regard themselves as Christians and want for their children something more than secularised education. Hence the need for retaining what the Bishop of Oxford had called the 'fatal Cowper-Temple entail.' They had done a great deal in the Bill by the adoption entirely of the Archbishop's five points to ensure that the teachers who gave religious instruction should be people who felt that they had a calling in that direction. But any attempt to apply to every teacher a

religious test would mean that we should not get the number of teachers we require. He supported the proposal for agreed syllabuses, saying that it had the support of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and he quoted at length a letter which Dr. Hensley Henson, the former Bishop of Durham, had written to *The Times* commending the compromise.¹ In it Dr. Henson contended that in the past religious teaching was not taken seriously because it had no secure place in the official scheme. Thus, he argued, the prestige of Christianity had been lowered in the nation and its authority over the whole area of human life weakened. The nation rightly desires that the school should assist the solidarity of the nation and not tend to stereotype and even exacerbate its sectarian divisions. 'Personally,' concluded the quotation from the Bishop's letter, 'I must regret that Mr. Butler did not "grasp the nettle" by making an end of the dual system, but it is too late now to raise that issue.' Mr. Chuter Ede reminded his Catholic friends that the compromise applied to Secondary as well as to Primary Schools, and thereby they were going to get great benefits. As a member of the Surrey County Council, he observed, he had been negotiating to take a convent school off the direct-grant list on to the deficiency-grant list. Under the direct-grant list the school received £2,112, while through the Surrey County Council as a deficiency-aided school it was going to receive £6,000.

Towards the close of his speech, Mr. Ede made a comparison with the legislation of 1918. 'With all its merits,' he declared, 'Mr. Fisher's Bill failed because it declined to tackle the two outstanding problems, the dual system and the local authority problem. We have in this measure, for good or ill, attempted to survey the whole field, educational, administrative and religious.' The Parliamentary Secretary was often during the Committee stage able, as an old schoolmaster, to confront the House with the realities of school life. Mr. Linstead, Mr. R. H. Morgan and Mr. Gallacher had in turn referred to the vital issue of too large classes. 'Of all the reforms necessary in the educational field,' said Mr. Linstead very truly, 'there was nothing greater than the need for smaller classes.' Mr. Ede replied that the first class he had when he left college was 73, and he himself had been taught in a class of 90. 'The Government realised that the problem of

¹ Dr. Henson expressed similar views as long ago as 1905. Cf. his article in *The Child and Religion* (Williams & Norgate, 1905).

the size of the class, with its corollary the supply of teachers, went to the root of the Bill.'

Women members were present for the first time while a great Education Bill was under discussion; and it was generally expected that they would take a more prominent part in the debates than they did. One of the most practical contributions was that of Miss Megan Lloyd George, who hoped that in planning nursery education 'the Minister would not establish the break at five.' Mr. Cove supported her, saying there was a fear that infant schools were going to be crushed. Miss Lloyd George urged that people who had studied the matter had declared quite emphatically that seven was a more appropriate age than five for children to enter upon what was a new life for them. Mr. Butler replied that there were so many opinions on this subject that he would amend a clause 'so as to enable authorities to delineate the nature of the provisions they proposed for nursery and infant schools.' They would have perfect freedom to continue their experiments in nursery schools. Another woman member, Mrs. Cazalet Keir, provoked the only real storm of the debates when she sought to graft the principle of 'equal pay' into the clause authorising the Minister to approve salary scales for teachers. She carried her amendment against the Government, though it was subsequently annulled; but in spite of the annulment Mrs. Cazalet Keir can fairly claim credit for two positive achievements, for she brought the Prime Minister into the Education Bill debate, and he made the issue one of confidence in the Government; and she stimulated the setting up almost at once of a Royal Commission to consider the whole vexed and involved question of equal pay.

THE EDUCATION BILL RECEIVES THE ROYAL ASSENT

Although the discussions on the Bill resulted in its modification on a number of points, there was no major alteration of substance; and when after consideration by the Lords it received the Royal Assent on August 3rd, 1944, it was essentially the same measure as that presented by Mr. Butler on December 15th, 1943.¹ It was a great accomplishment, due not a little to the wisdom, patience and understanding shown by the Minister himself. 'A national achievement,' he called it, in winding up the third reading, 'which shows to our own people, to our Empire and to foreign countries

¹ For a full account of the amendments see Sir Ross Barker, 'Education Act 1944' (supplement to *Owen's Education Acts Manual*) published by Charles Knight & Co., pp. 25-8.

the intensity and vitality of the greatness of our people.' It is almost certainly true that only a national government could have produced such a measure, and it was a fortunate coincidence that the Minister and the Parliamentary Secretary, though such a happy combination, were of different parties and different outlook. 'My right hon. Friend,' said Mr. Ede, 'represents one tradition of the educational life of our country, the tradition that passes from the Public Schools into the University; I come from the other tradition—from the Elementary School, through the Secondary School to the University.' People will misunderstand the Butler Act if they do not recognise that it involves a unification of these two strands in our national life, and that in accomplishing the synthesis we shall have to avoid the soft option of levelling down. Or, to express the thought with more optimism, our objective must be to raise our standards to what is highest and best in our educational life, and to do so without impairing the rich diversity of our educational tradition.

Many were the tributes paid to the Bill and its authors. 'I regard this as a great Bill,' said Mr. Leach, Member for Bradford Central. 'I have seen Press comments to the effect that the Minister of Education is a great Minister, second only to the late Mr. Fisher. I differ entirely from that judgment. I place him a good deal higher. The combination of the Minister himself and the Parliamentary Secretary is about as powerful a one as this House has seen for many years in piloting any kind of Bill.' Mr. Colegate, Member for the Wrekin, voiced a similar opinion, congratulating both Mr. Butler and Mr. Ede. 'The President of the Board of Education,' he said, 'bears a very distinguished name in the academic world, and some of us recall with pleasure that his father still holds a distinguished academic post in the University of Cambridge. This measure, the first and greatest, in my opinion, of the reconstruction measures, fulfils, I think, the legitimate hope of everybody who has the interests of education at heart and who has had a realistic understanding of what is happening in the world to-day. We shall have many other reconstruction measures, but most of them will in the course of time dwindle and disappear; this will go on and affect the lives of two future generations at least, and will then affect part of the future of the next succeeding generation.' Caution would evidently not allow him to project his mind further into time, and who, having lived through two great wars, would dare to look beyond the third generation? All the more reason, therefore, why we should

make haste to bring the Act into effective operation, but let us not forget that, as Mr. Butler has said, 'to convert legal phraseology into a living force will call for great and sustained exertions.'

NORWOOD, FLEMING AND MCNAIR

Education has often been well served by Departmental Committees and similar enquiries, as we noted at the beginning of Chapter V, and Mr. Butler was quick to seize on this method as a means of sorting out some of his more difficult problems. In the autumn of 1941 he asked a Committee of the Secondary School Examinations Council 'to consider suggested changes in the Secondary School curriculum and the question of School Examinations in relation thereto.' This body came to be known as the Norwood Committee because Sir Cyril Norwood was its Chairman, and after meeting twenty-five times it produced an interesting report which revealed that it had interpreted its reference somewhat liberally.¹ The document divides, like Caesar's Gaul, into three parts, and concludes with a number of recommendations. The latter did not receive too good a reception, and it is not impossible that the Report as a whole has been undervalued for that reason; its quality, however, is good and as a survey of the problems of the Secondary School curriculum it well repays careful reading. Part I begins with an account of the existing Secondary School, its importance and tradition and its special aims; it then reviews suggested changes in the curriculum and claims that these are due to the growth of 'a child-centred conception of education.' It proceeds to sketch the main features of a new Secondary education, and expresses the view that it is desirable that students should give six months to some form of public service between school and University or other branches of higher education. It speaks of Grammar, Technical and Modern Schools as types of the new division of Secondary education, and records that many witnesses spoke of multilateral schools, adding sardonically that few used the phrase in the same sense. Part II deals with the possible reorganisation of the examinations of the existing Secondary Schools with a view to an increase of freedom in the school and an enlargement of the teacher's responsibility. Part III deals entirely with the curriculum, and considers how, using the greater freedom which a reorganisation of examinations

¹ *Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools* (H.M.S.O., 1943).

would permit, the course of study could be more closely adjusted to the aptitude and ability of the pupil.

The Norwood Report recommends that there should be three types of Secondary education, as noted above, and advises that in suitable circumstances the different types should be combined. Each type should be so organised, particularly in the lower forms, as to make transfer as easy as possible. Differentiation of the pupils for the kind of Secondary education appropriate to them should be made upon the basis of (a) the opinion of the Primary School teacher, supplemented if desired by (b) intelligence, performance, and other tests. Due consideration should be given to the choice of the parent and the pupil. The curriculum of the lower school (11-13) should be roughly common to all schools, and during this period the pupil should be under the supervision of a teacher, responsible for recommending the type of Secondary education most appropriate in each case at the age of thirteen *plus*. Thus the pupil would have two opportunities of finding his way into the most suitable school or branch of the school. The School Certificate examination should gradually be modified so as to become entirely internal, that is to say, conducted by the teachers at the school on syllabuses and papers framed by themselves. But for a transitional period of seven years, subject to certain modifications, the examination should continue to be carried out by existing University Examining Bodies. At the end of the seven years a decision should be made as to whether conditions make possible a change to a wholly internal examination, or whether a further transitional period is desirable.

The Higher School Certificate examination should, said the Norwood Committee, be abolished and State and Local Education Authority scholarships be awarded on a different basis. The winning of a College scholarship at Oxford or Cambridge or a University scholarship elsewhere should constitute a claim upon public funds for assistance, subject to evidence of need; and the award of State and Local Education Authority scholarships should depend on an examination by the University Examining Bodies and the school records of the candidates. The Inspectorate should be increased so as to enhance public confidence in the internal examinations.

One wonders sometimes how a Committee of resolute people arrive at agreement when set a highly debatable problem. Although the Norwood Report is singularly impersonal, it be-

comes strangely human at its close and lifts the curtain most unexpectedly to explain how the twelve signatories managed to sign it, with one only—a teacher—making a reservation, and that concerning the proposed internal examination. We are told that the measure of their assent to each item varied, and that they were careful not to probe too deeply into the future; thus with a sigh of relief after much tacking they managed to bring their cargo into dock. The Fleming Committee, however, were not so fortunate, for they were asked rather prematurely to present an interim report because the President wanted early guidance on the question whether fees in grant-aided Secondary Schools should be abolished.¹ They soon found themselves hopelessly divided on the issue of whether fees should be charged in that small class of schools known as Direct Grant Schools. The majority report, signed by eleven members, took the view that fees should be abolished both in grant-aided and direct-grant schools, but they felt that there might be a few schools, especially those with a large boarding element, which would have to be regarded as exceptions to the rule. The minority report, signed by seven members, including Lord Fleming, the Chairman, and Dr. Fisher, the Bishop of London,² declared, 'we are unable to agree with our colleagues on the question of the abolition of fees in grant-aided schools.' And they went further and said, 'that the great Direct Grant Schools which are already making a contribution to the State system of education should have the opportunity of choosing the same terms as those that may be offered to the Independent Schools.' It is not surprising that this sharp cleavage of opinion found an echo in the debates on the Education Bill, and although for the present the minority view tends to prevail in official quarters, it would be unwise to assume that the controversy has exhausted itself.

The main Report of the Fleming Committee was issued in the summer of 1944, just two years after its appointment;³ and was unanimous. The Committee had been asked 'to consider means whereby the association between the Public Schools, (by which term is meant schools which are in membership of the Governing Bodies' Association or Head Masters' Conference) and the general educational system of the country could be developed and

¹ *Abolition of Tuition Fees in Grant-aided Secondary Schools* (H.M.S.O., 1943).

² Appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, January 1945.

³ *The Public Schools and the General Educational System* (H.M.S.O., 1944).

extended; also to consider how far any measures recommended in the case of boys' Public Schools could be applied to comparable schools for girls.' It was the first report about Public Schools to be made since the eighteen-sixties, and it is not surprising therefore that the Committee took two years over their labours and became intensely retrospective. Indeed a great part of the report is historical, and it includes a learned appendix on the significance of the term 'Public School,' thus answering with much erudition the question raised in Chapter III of this book. The historical sketch will be of great service to students of our educational history, and it fulfils the immediate purpose of showing that, while much of our Secondary School provision is centuries old, many Public Schools are relatively modern foundations. This leads the Fleming Committee to absolve the Public Schools of the charge of creating our social distinctions; 'they were,' we are reminded, 'in fact, called into existence to meet the needs of a society already deeply divided.' The Committee, however, seemed to agree that these schools tend to perpetuate these distinctions and that there is urgent need for a change in their methods of recruitment, so that entry does not depend so much on the possession of a good income. They divided their problem into two parts: (i) How to associate the independent Public Schools with the national service of education, (ii) How to develop the association of schools of the Direct Grant type with 'the general system of schools which are in administrative relation with the Local Education Authorities'; and in the first category they reckoned that 89 schools were involved while 99 aided by grants direct or local were counted in the second category.

'Our ultimate objective,' said the Committee, 'is to give all children, irrespective of their parents' means, the opportunity of education at whatever type of school is best suited to their needs and aptitudes.' How far their proposals are likely, if adopted, to accomplish this, the reader will no doubt judge for himself; but here in summary are the two complicated schemes, called A (Direct Grant Schools) and B (Public Schools), which the Fleming Committee unanimously put forward as their solution. Under Scheme 'A' a number of schools, day and boarding, would be accepted by the Ministry of Education as 'associated schools'; they would abolish their tuition fees or they would have fees graded according to a national income scale, based on parents'

means; the local Education Authority would have the right to reserve places at each school and would pay the boarding and tuition fees of any pupils sent by them; for other pupils the schools would as now receive direct grant from the Ministry; at least one-third of the Governing Body would be nominated by the Local Education Authority. Scheme 'B' would apply only to Boarding Schools, which would offer a minimum of 25 per cent. of their annual admissions to pupils from grant-aided Primary Schools. The places would be filled by the award of bursaries paid for by the Ministry and parents would be free to apply for their child's admission to any Boarding School which had been accepted under the scheme. The bursars would be selected by a Regional Board, and the value of the bursary in each case would be sufficient to meet the total cost of boarding, tuition and other expenses subject to any contribution from the parent under an income scale. Local Education Authorities also would be able, if they wished, to reserve places, by agreement with the Ministry and the Governing Body, and award bursaries, and in such cases some of the Governors would be nominated by the Local Authority.

The Fleming Committee had an extremely difficult task; with Britain in the vanguard of democracy they were called upon to find a way of associating about one hundred and eighty rather exclusive schools with an educational service planned on thoroughly democratic lines. They laboured under many handicaps; for example, they could not undo history, nor could they obliterate these schools because some of them were among the best in the land. They had somehow to find a niche for them in a world grown contemptuous of privilege and the power of the purse. The two alternative schemes which they propose bear all the marks of improvisation and compromise; but they were agreed unanimously by this large Fleming Committee which contained leaders of almost every kind of educational opinion, and it is most unlikely that any similar body could have found a more acceptable solution. Having propounded it, they gave expression to one important caveat: 'it will be fatal,' they said, 'to our schemes, and most unfortunate for education generally, if any school, or group of schools, by standing out creates among the schools of the country a fresh social distinction which can scarcely fail to be more serious than the old.' It is not to be expected that the proposals will be very welcome in any quarter;

and much will depend on how far all concerned are able to sink differences of opinion and infuse goodwill into the schemes as they eventually emanate from the Ministry. It is probably as well not to expect too much of any scheme propounded, and to regard it in the first instance as nothing more than an attempt to break down the unfortunate barrier between two important groups of schools and the national service of education. Those who expect it to dissolve social distinctions are sure to be disappointed; for one thing, as the Fleming Committee themselves point out, the social distinctions exist apart from the Public Schools, but more important is the fact that the divisions are due to causes much too deep to be eradicated by the device of a percentage admission of bursaries to a small group of schools, however influential some of them may be. 'It is,' says the head master of Maidstone Grammar School, voicing an opinion fairly widely held, 'from the unhindered development of the Secondary day schools, opening the gates of opportunity to so many children and gaining each year the esteem and confidence of more and more parents, and from far freer access from them to universities and professions, that the resolution of our social divisions may be most hopefully expected, and not from the artificial association with them, on unequal terms, of schools whose evolution has been based on utterly different principles.'¹ Still it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the association is desirable, and that it is never too soon for it to begin.

While the Fleming Committee spent much of its time looking backwards into the past, the Committee presided over by Sir Arnold McNair paid little attention to history and concentrated almost entirely on immediate and future needs.² The task assigned to it was 'to investigate the present sources of supply and the methods of recruitment and training of teachers and youth leaders and to report what principles should guide the Board in these matters in the future.' It began its labours in April 1942 and concluded them two years later, producing an excellent report leading up to several important recommendations. Fortunately, the Committee realised from the first that its problem could not be solved by a readjustment of existing training facilities or a modification of curricula and syllabuses; it

¹ Mr. W. A. Claydon on 'Fleming Report' in *Journal of Education*, September 1944.

² *Teachers and Youth Leaders*—Report of Committee on supply, recruitment and training of teachers and youth leaders. (H.M.S.O., 1944.)

appreciated from the outset that if the 100,000 or so additional teachers required for post-war education were to be obtained and standards were to be improved, then fundamental changes were necessary and the terms of reference would have to be interpreted in a bold spirit. Clearly the teaching profession would have to be made much more attractive than it has been in the past and 'the standing of education' would have to be raised. There is much emphasis in the report, therefore, on 'conditions of service' and upon salaries, including a notable recommendation, afterwards adopted by the Burnham Committee, that there should be one basic salary scale for all qualified teachers with allowances to reward those holding posts of special responsibility. The report also recognises the importance of quality in the staffs of training colleges and advises that their salaries should approximate to University levels; and so that they may not be mere theorists, proposals are made for the secondment of teachers on a periodical basis from the schools for this work.

On one important issue the Committee failed to agree, and somewhat inconsiderately they divided equally, so that the Minister was left without a majority recommendation on the point in question, namely, whether the University or a Joint Board should be regionally responsible for the training of teachers. Those who favoured the University solution wanted each University to establish a School of Education responsible for the training and the assessment of the work of all students who are seeking to be recognised as qualified teachers; and this University School was to consist of an organic federation of approved training institutions working in close co-operation under the ægis of the University. Those who favoured a Joint Board wanted it to be responsible for the organisation of an area training service in which there would normally be a university training department and training colleges preserving their identity. The Committee was, however, unanimous that at the centre there should be a Central Training Council, consisting of not less than three nor more than five members with a full-time Chairman, charged with the duty of advising the Minister 'about bringing into being that form of area training service recommended in this Report' which he decides to adopt. The Committee rightly suggest that what is involved in the University proposal is 'a major constitutional change,' and it will not be surprising if there is some hesitancy about adopting either it or the alternative.

The Universities are naturally anxious not to overwhelm themselves with large numbers of students preparing for one vocation, however important and comprehensive; they are not unmindful of the view expressed by Flexner that they may fail to perform 'their highest obligations precisely to the extent that they assume irrelevant and distracted activities.' On the other hand, it is clear that the Universities must always play an important part in the preparation of the teacher, and it is not surprising therefore that some, especially members of the teaching profession, hold strongly that the training of teachers is a University responsibility. The advocates of University Schools of Education do not suggest, however, that all teachers should be University graduates or that all training should be done within a certain mileage of the University. 'There should be nothing disturbing,' they say, 'though there may be something new, in the idea of a school or department of a University having an outpost in the form of an affiliated institution fifty miles away.' It is not impossible that a solution will be found which while giving the University a lion's share in this task will yet call into existence Joint Councils to help the University and Training Colleges to work in close affiliation.

The McNair Report presses strongly for a widening of the field of recruitment. The teaching profession throughout all its ranges must, it declares, in future recruit from all types of Secondary School, including 'the Public Schools,' and it calls attention to a further important source of supply, namely industry, commerce and the professions. The teacher, it continues, is often said to lead a narrow life; it condemns the practice therefore of dismissing women teachers on marriage¹; and also advises that teachers should be encouraged to participate in public affairs. The impact of education on society makes it desirable that teachers should not be 'a race apart,' and we ought, the Report urges, to see to it that their education and training are such as will encourage them to live a full and active life. 'England—' it proceeds, 'we do not say England and Wales—has never attached enough importance to education and has therefore never given to the teaching profession the esteem that it needs and deserves.'

So it pleads for a change of heart on the part of the English people, and reminds us of the ever-widening scope of the modern teacher's function and his potential influence as a builder of society. His range is constantly changing; new discoveries,

¹ Now prohibited by the Education Act.

research, industrial transformations, war and peace, agricultural development, the cinema, broadcasting, problems of the British commonwealth, the international scene—all these and much else affect his curriculum and gain or lose by his knowledge or lack of it. Nor is it primarily a question of knowledge. Mr. G. M. Trevelyan, in his *English Social History*, passes judgment on our 'modern system of public education'; it has, he declared, conferred great benefits on this country and taught a vast population to read. But there is much yet to be done. We have to train this great multitude to discriminate and not to be 'an easy prey to sensations and cheap appeals.'¹ The McNair answer to such a challenge is to emphasise the importance of quality in the teacher. Every teacher, it declares, is directly involved in moulding the shape of things to come; and although to implement the new Education Act we shall have to enlist thousands of teachers, we must strive if we are to create a wise democracy to recruit men and women of the highest calibre—'the very best of our fellow-citizens.' We could do worse than adopt that admirable phrase—'the very best of our fellow-citizens'—as the lodestar of our educational policy during the years ahead.

¹ G. M. Trevelyan: *English Social History* (Longmans, 1944), p. 582.

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